# PHENOMENOLOGY: EAST AND WEST

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PHENOMENOLOGY

IN COOPERATION WITH
THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH IN PHENOMENOLOGY

Volume 13



Scope

The purpose of this series is to foster the development of phenomenological philosophy through creative research. Contemporary issues in philosophy, other disciplines and in culture generally, offer opportunities for the application of phenomenological methods that call for creative responses. Although the work of several generations of thinkers has provided phenomenology with many results with which to approach these challenges, a truly successful response to them will require building on this work with new analyses and methodological innovations.

# PHENOMENOLOGY: EAST AND WEST

## Essays in Honor of J.N. Mohanty

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SPRINGER-SCIENCE+BUSINESS MEDIA, B.V.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Phenomenology, East and West : essays in honor of J.N. Mohanty /
edited by Frank M. Kirkland and D.P. Chattopadhyaya.
p. cm. -- (Contributions to phenomenology ; v. 13)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-94-010-4702-9 ISBN 978-94-011-1612-1 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-94-011-1612-1
1. Phenomenology. 2. Transcendentalism. 3. Mohanty, Jitendranath, 1928- . I. Mohanty, Jitendranath, 1928- . II. Kirkland, Frank M. III. Chattopadhyaya, D. P. (Debi Prasad), 1933- . IV. Series.
B829.5.P464 1993
142'.7--dc20 92-41533

ISBN 978-94-010-4702-9

*Printed on acid-free paper*

## CONTENTS

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume was edited with the support of a number of individuals. Thanks are due to Carlos Hortas, Dean of the Division of Humanities and Arts at Hunter College of the City University of New York, for funds to put the papers originally on disk. We acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Ms. Susanna Wong for performing the word-processing work at the beginning stages of this manuscript and to Ms. Mary Wills for her crackerjack word-processing advice. And we are ever grateful to Mr. Cecil Corbin-Mark for the serenity and forbearance he continually brought to the preparation of the manuscript. Finally, we thank the University of Hawaii Press for permission to use Eliot Deutsch's "The Concept of the Body", which appears in his book *On Creative Being: The Crafting of Person and World.*

The Editors
August 1992

# INTRODUCTION

To know the work of Jitendra Nath Mohanty even slightly is to commence to appreciate it immensely. Lucidity and sagacity have been its armor; originality and ingenuity have been its strength. And wearing the former and wielding the latter have become so persistent a mark of his work as to suggest that their appeal for Mohanty lies altogether more in the refined reaches of philosophical craftsmanship than on the coarse ground of intellectual partisanship. The multifaceted character of his work in phenomenology and Indian philosophy has never left us palled by its significance and, as a consequence, has always left us conceding its command on our philosophical discourse. It has fulfilled the most welcomed promise of striking the chords of both imagination and reason by exposing Husserlian phenomenology to the concerns of both the so-called "analytical" and "continental" traditions and by exposing the philosophical tradition of Indian thought to the intricacies of Husserl.

Although charting and periodizing the body of Mohanty's work in phenomenology may be the function of a memory inconspicuous for originality and liveliness, they nonetheless offer a précis conspicuous for the variety of topics that Mohanty has both engaged and enriched. Mohanty's career in phenomenology can be characterized by three phases, each concentrating on different themes, but with the latter two also epitomizing a more incisive and deeper discussion of the issues raised in the first. Representative of Mohanty's early phase is his focus on Husserl's philosophy of language and meaning exemplified in *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*. Mohanty set in motion an orientation toward Husserlian phenomenology that made meaning the central point on which the conversion from the natural to the phenomenological attitude turns. Furthermore, he established the interpretive stance of carefully demarcating Husserl's theory of meaning from (1) those which naturalistically treat meanings as components of mental states and (2) those which formalistically regard meanings as an

assortment of rules definitive of their strict association either with other intensional items or with non-natural objects. By separating Husserl's theory from (1), Mohanty is able to underscore with clarity Husserl's affirmation of the ideality of meanings and his recognition of their difference from mental presentations or states; by separating it from (2), he is able to reveal the importance of Husserl's thesis concerning the correlation of meaning and experience. The consequence of the first separation displays Husserl's anti-psychologistic stance; the consequence of the second addresses the intentionality of consciousness. But neither is given strong treatment in the early phase.

What emerges in Mohanty's middle phase is full-fledged concerns with intentionality and with the philosophy of Frege, which stem from historical and systematic complexities surrounding Husserl's theory of meaning. Husserl's conception of the intentional structure of consciousness and the variations it assumes both inside and outside his phenomenology are examined in Mohanty's *The Concept of Intentionality*. Mohanty argues that Husserl's modifications of his notion of intentionality (from consciousness as "consciousness of something" to consciousness as "noetic-noematic correlation" and finally to consciousness as "constitution of sense or meaning") are in effect sharper answers to Husserl's own query: "[W]hat the 'claim' of consciousness actually to 'relate' to something objective, to be 'well-founded', properly signifies?" The thrust of Mohanty's argument is that the intentional structure of consciousness is best construed in terms of the "constitution of sense". For Mohanty, this entails the following points. 1) Any object and/or its mundane or experiential context are accessible only through patterns of meaning which are understood as *achievements* of consciousness. 2) These achievements admit of an autonomy or apriori status signifying that at least some of their features are not due to the mundane characterizations or experience of objects but to the meaning-bestowing activity of consciousness. 3) To make the meaning-bestowing activity of consciousness thematic requires submitting its achievements to the phenomenological reduction and, as a consequence, addresses the matter of patterns of meaning having apriori status yet still functioning as interpretations through which the objectivity of anything mundane or empirical is presented to consciousness. These three points, Mohanty believes, place us at the threshold of the transcendental standpoint and right smack in the middle of complicated controversies about consciousness' "transcendental-empirical" identity.

Mohanty's meditations on Frege, which ultimately culminate in his work *Husserl and Frege*, sets the parameters for determining whether and how the philosophical approaches of Frege to meaning, psychologism, logic and epistemology have a bearing on those of Husserl. He is led to the conclusion that "a Fregean reading of Husserl I [Mohanty] reject, but a Husserlian reading of Frege is what I espouse." What brings him to this position?

Despite their anti-psychologistic views, Mohanty believes that Husserl sustained and developed, unlike Frege, a robust philosophy of mind through his ever-penetrating analysis of intentionality. Husserl was able to pursue, Mohanty contends, a deeper and wider analysis of the mind as the intentional correlation of mental life and meanings that was theoretically and methodologically distinguished from an analysis of the mind which naturalistically reduced meanings to empirically ideal items of mental life, viz., psychologism. Since Frege had a rather limited philosophy of mind, he viewed mental life solely as empirical processes dealing only with private, particular subjective items, indeed to be sharply separated from logical meanings as ontologically type-distinct. Frege's view of mental life and his awareness of its ontological type-distinctness from meanings are what motivate his anti-psychologism. Husserl's view of mental life and his awareness of analyses of it as theoretically and methodologically type-distinct are what motivate his anti-psychologism.

Moreover, both Husserl and Frege agree that meanings are objective, public, non-temporal, and distinct from objects of reference. But even on this matter Mohanty detects a difference between them. Whereas Frege's conception of meaning involves the semantic connection of meaning to linguistic expression, enabling the expression to refer to an object, Husserl's conception of meaning involves the intentional connection of meaning to mental life, enabling a mental act to refer to an object in an expressible way. In addition, Mohanty argues, meanings for Husserl cannot be conceptual or linguistic generically, because mental acts include perceptual ones as well, and the meaning intentionally connected to a perceptual act, say perceiving a blue car, is not identical with either the meaning of the sentence 'The car is blue' or the meaning of a speech act that is being expressed in the utterance 'The car is blue.' We have now entered the arena of Husserl's notion of perceptual meaning or "perceptual noema", and Mohanty convincingly argues against fitting it in the garb of Fregean meanings, which are *in toto* abstract, conceptual, and linguistic. For

Mohanty, perceptual meanings do not entail acts of perception in which a subject perceives only meanings but not objects, and they obviously do not entail acts of perception in which a subject perceives only objects but not meanings. They rather involve acts of perception in which a subject perceives objects with meanings or as meaningful.

Brevity prevents us from giving Mohanty's analysis of perceptual meaning in its entirety. But allow us to give his conclusions. Like linguistic meanings, perceptual ones, according to Mohanty, are objective and public, but unlike linguistic meanings, they are *neither non-temporal nor distinct from objects of reference*. Since acts of perception are rooted in actual experience, they unavoidably engender indexicals whose meanings are inescapably dependent on a given experiential context, i.e., bound to place, time, history, culture. Furthermore, since perceptual meaning characterizes the manner in which the object is presented in perception, it renders the meaning-reference distinction indistinct, because the object is presented in perceptual acts as already meaningful and as tied in varying degrees to a network of other objects and events as well as to the interests of the perceiver, all of which contribute to its meaningfulness. The object is not presented in perceptual acts as something to which meanings are imputed. As one can see, Mohanty's stance on perceptual meanings opens discussion on the lifeworld and on *genetic* phenomenological inquiry geared to address questions concerning the manner in which objects obtain the meaning they do for perceptual *and* speech acts. It should be noted that Mohanty's arguments on these issues serve as points of departure for his critical remarks of Hintikka's and Searle's positions on intentionality.

The recent or third phase of Mohanty's philosophical career can be characterized as an investigation into what he calls "the possibility of transcendental philosophy", especially in the light of the current philosophical ethos in which the call for the "end of philosophy" prevails in numerous forms. One of the forms this call takes is (a) the termination of all foundational epistemologies indicative of the transcendental kind (Derrida, Foucault, Rorty). Another form is (b) the transformation of transcendental philosophy to social theory (Bourdieu, Habermas). Still another significant form is (c) the transformation of transcendental philosophy to hermeneutical reflections on or to historical narratives of the background resources of the lifeworld that fuel culturally embedded accounts and practices with regard to what counts as knowledge, to what shapes personal or

cultural identity, and to what makes up the normative ties and lines that bind and divide respectively (Gadamer, MacIntyre, Rorty, Taylor). Finally there is (d) the call for philosophy to proceed with its foundational orientation bearing the imprimatur of transcendentalism but in the modified shape of a theory of meaning (Apel, Davidson, Dummett, Putnam).

At first glance it appears that Mohanty would be more closely affiliated with the position advanced in (d). Yet, in his works *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy* and *Transcendental Phenomenology: An Analytic Account*, Mohanty stakes a position that coordinates or brings together (c) and (d), and it carries a number of steps. First, Mohanty concedes the irreversible character and impact of cultural diversity or "multiculturalism" on how the world is to be philosophically understood and he accepts the issue of relativism that comes with it. Second, by acknowledging in the first step that relativism is initially philosophically admissible, Mohanty further claims that transcendental philosophy can no longer operate with a "monistic conception of truth and so of *the* world" or with a privileged or "preferred representation of the world" or with a "preferred science or ontology". Ordinarily these two steps would finalize relativism's philosophical eligibility, but that is not Mohanty's philosophical goal. His purpose is to "overcome relativism" transcendentally, not dismiss it hastily even in a transcendental manner.

So, third, he maintains that transcendental philosophy should shift from being an investigation into the epistemic conditions of the possibility of truth to an investigation into the phenomenological conditions of the possibility of meanings, because the concept of meaning is presupposed by the concept of truth, and because meanings primarily appertain pragmatically to a cultural context. Fourth, since phenomenology in its transcendental form is concerned with showing that the "constitution of meaning" rests on the meaning-bestowing activity of consciousness or the subject", it must also, Mohanty contends, come to grips with the view that both meanings and the subject appear as *already constituted* in a variety of fashions due to the plurality of cultural traditions and languages. For Mohanty, this is accomplished by demonstrating that diverse linguistic and cultural patterns of meaning (i) can and do "overlap" and (ii) are capable of a kind of mutual translation, the former virtually removing the difficulties of sharing meanings across different cultures, the latter integrally sustaining as a "regulative ideal" the enrichment of both the pragmatic and semantic potential

of languages enabling discourse about *one* world. Fifth, to address the issues raised in the fourth point requires of a culturally embedded individual to adopt a reflective posture in which different and even competing cultural patterns of meanings, say about X, including that individual's own, can be arrayed and given equal consideration. This reflective posture is the transcendental stance, in which a certain methodological distinction is preserved and not circumvented, viz., the distinction between on the one hand culturally (life-worldly) specific patterns of meaning and their culturally embedded modes of rational evaluation and on the other hand a meaning-laden reflective assessment of the ongoing achievement of one world known and shared in common through those patterns in their historical and cultural diversity.

Although this phase of Mohanty's work in phenomenology is still ongoing, nonetheless, Mohanty would still attest to certain conclusions that mark for him the "destiny of transcendental philosophy". Clearly Mohanty's transcendentalism does not entail the uncoupling of the reflective posture of the subject from the "life-worldly" embeddedness of the subject. Nor does Mohanty give credence to the replacement of culturally situated modes of rationally evaluating patterns of meaning with transcendental reflective assessments of those patterns. Rather, in short, he defends a transcendentalism that (a) supplements those historically situated rational evaluations of meaning-patterns with a reflective examination of the sense(s) of history in which those patterns are constituted and (b) supplements the cultural diversity of meaning-patterns with a reflective examination of how the diversity of those patterns contributes to the legitimate idealization of the sense of one world.

As stated earlier, the latter two phases of Mohanty's career in phenomenology epitomizes a deepening of issues raised in the first. It should be now clear that what has been subject to a more penetrating discussion in his later phases is the serviceability of phenomenological conceptions of meaning for the task of transcendental philosophy.

Concomitant with these three phases of Mohanty's phenomenological career, spanning over thirty years, has been Mohanty's ground-breaking work in Indian Philosophy. This work is, however, less known to philosophers outside of the Indian sub-continent. Although Mohanty's interest in Indian Philosophy can be interpreted along the lines of the matters raised in the abovementioned third phase of his phenomenological career, biographically his interest in Indian Philosophy

is traceable to his early years as a student, researcher and teacher at Calcutta University, at which time he published a number of essays on Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo.

What is not well known is that to pursue Indian Philosophy deeply a person is expected to study with a traditional pundit or classical scholar versed in Sanskrit. Mohanty had the good fortune to study with two very eminent scholar of his time -- Pundit Yogendranath Tarkavedantatirtha and Pundit Ananta Kumar Tarkatirtha. With the former, he perused Śamkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāsya* together with two important commentaries on it, viz., *Bhāmati* and *Pancapādikāvivarana*. With the latter, he spent many years studying *Navya-Nyāya* (Neo-logic). Among the many areas of Indian Philosophy, Mohanty's research focussed on Indian theories of knowledge, meaning and truth. What intrigued him strongly was a question raised in Navya-Nyāya's analysis of knowledge -- does knowledge have a content apart from an object? In addition, he was interested in comprehending issues surrounding idealism vs. realism as formulated in the light of *sākāratva-nirākāratva* of cognitions. According to some Buddhist (*Vijñānavāda*) idealists, since cognition has a form and is self-manifesting, the alleged object that is presented in a cognition is nothing but the form of the cognition. The Naiyāyika logicians, Udayana and Jayanta to name two, agree that illumination itself is without form, but the form (*ākāra*) of the external object distinguishes the content of one consciousness from another and imparts distinctness to the specific judgement(s). What is called "form" is grasped content and what is called "illumination" is the consciousness or judgement which grasps the content.

During the 1960's, Mohanty devoted his attention to the nature of the various definitions and theories of truth in the philosophical tradition of Indian thought. His work on truth gradually led him in the 1970's to work on theories of meaning. This is evident from his concern with *śabda* (verbal testimony) as an independent *pramāna* (means of cognition). Mohanty raised and persuaded others to raise the question of whether there was a theory of sense, as distinguished from a theory of reference, in Indian Philosophy, a query clearly tied to his work on Frege and Husserl. Mohanty directs this question to supporters of *abhihitānva-yavāda* and of *anvitābhidhānavāda* and asks how their opposing insights can be satisfactorily reconciled. The basic postulate of *abhihitānvayavāda*, defended by Bhātta Mīmāmsakas and Nyāya-Vaiśesikas, is a kind of semantic atomism. It states that (a) the meaning of a sentence (*vākya*) is composed of the meanings

of the words in it and (b) a person must first understand the meanings of a sentence's words to understand the meaning of the sentence. The opposing basic postulate of *anvitābhidhānavāda*, defended by Prābhākaras, Mīmāmsakas and Vedāntins, is a kind of semantic (sentential) holism. It asserts that (a) sentential meaning is composed of individual word meanings, (b) a person is not required to first understand the individual word meanings to understand the sentential meaning, and (c) a person directly understands sentential meaning subsequent to hearing the words of the sentence.

Mohanty still maintains a strong interest in *śabda*. Despite his concession that *śabda* is indispensable for a person's belief in supersensible realities such as moral rules, Mohanty tries to work out if it is necessary to recognize *śabda* as an irreducible mode of knowing empirical objects. Some philosophers treat *śabda* as a kind of perception (*pratyaksa*). Others claim that it is basically inferential (*anumāna*) in character. According to Mohanty, if one tries to make a plausible case for *śabda* as a *pramāna*, then one has to reconcile the elements of both perception and inference in it. His investigations has led him to affirm and appreciate the role of the notion of tradition in thinking, finding evidence for his beliefs in Gadamer's discussion of the notion of prejudice and in Hegel's notion of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*). At the same time he has begun to reflect on the notion of *śruti* texts as *apauruseya* (authorless). He has salvaged from it the idea of the primacy of the text's context over the author, the primacy of textual context over authorial intention for the interpretation of texts.

After having recently completed a major work on the structure of Indian logic, epistemology, and metaphysics (*Reason in Indian Thought*), Mohanty is currently developing a full-fledged account of Indian practical philosophy based on his studies of Indian theories of action as well as Indian theories of law and morality (*dharmaśāstra*). He also proposes to complete a work on Indian art and religion. In all these projects he tries to stay clear of two extremes -- a mere textual exegesis and a free impressionistic exposition unfettered by texts. In view of the supposed primacy of the textual tradition in Indian thought, Mohanty has been trying to keep his interpretations faithful to the texts, but at the same time keep himself free from conventional interpretations by offering novel, controversial yet plausible ones. Many of his interpretations are bound to appear cogent and creative to those who are expertly familiar with the Indian philosophical tradition.

Clearly Mohanty's body of work over the past thirty years reveals a remarkable grasp of numerous philosophical traditions and a wealth of original ideas, both of which have served to relax the strictures amongst those traditions and to broaden intellectual horizons. In commemoration of Mohanty, the essays collected in this volume take up his significant intellectual contributions toward phenomenology and the Indian philosophical tradition. The diversity of their topics attest to the multidimensional character and the fecundity of Mohanty's work, offering critical yet constructive discussion of his ideas. All but one of the essays are published here for the first time, and their authors include well-known philosophers from Europe, India, the United States, and Canada. Mohanty replies to these and other criticisms, taking the opportunity to clarify and further develop his views. This volume thus amounts to a critical and constructive dialogue with Mohanty, a dialogue which will, it is hoped, facilitate a continuous sympathetic appreciation of his thought.

# MOHANTY ON TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY

**David Carr**

## I

In the opening essay of his recent book *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, J.N. Mohanty begins by pointing out that "the best way to demonstrate the possibility of something is to show its actuality, for actuality implies possibility " (p. xiii).[1] How does one show the actuality of transcendental philosophy? It is not enough to show that something bearing this label still has adherents today. It is necessary to outline in a clear, coherent and consistent form what such a philosophy is to defend it against its critics.

This is what Mohanty has achieved in his remarkable collection of essays. I have thought for a long time that Mohanty's is the clearest and most defensible version of transcendental philosophy today, and that it deserves recognition as such. It would be a mistake to think that Mohanty is simply advocating Husserl's version of transcendental philosophy, as opposed to Kant's, or simply defending Husserl against his critics. Mohanty often presents his work in this way, and there is no denying the closeness of Mohanty to Husserl. But the fact is that Mohanty is at his best giving us *his version* of Husserl's transcendental philosophy. No doubt he wants to present the views which are truest to Husserl's best intentions and best insights, but this often involves criticizing the master and running counter to some of his explicit statements. Mohanty is neither a "Husserl scholar" nor an orthodox Husserlian but a philosopher in his own right.

In the main part of this essay I would like to present what strikes me as the primary features and the principle virtues of Mohanty's version of transcendental philosophy. Much of what I say will take the form of showing how Mohanty's version corrects certain standard misconceptions of transcendental philosophy. The general feature of these misconceptions, shared by analytic philosophers, non-transcendental phenomenologists and more recent "post-modern" philosophers, is to place transcendental phenomenology squarely in the modern epistemological-metaphysical tradition descending from Descartes and Kant.



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 1–11.

Mohanty believes, and I agree with him, that transcendental philosophy in its phenomenological form departs radically from that tradition and offers an important alternative to it. I hope to indicate briefly how this is so. I hasten to add that I am presenting *my* version of Mohanty's version of transcendental philosophy, one which will inevitably involve my own interpretation of what he says. I hope, but cannot guarantee, that Mohanty will agree with the views I attribute to him.

A second and briefer section of my essay will be devoted to certain questions that I believe are prompted by Mohanty's version of transcendental philosophy. I have said that Mohanty's is the most coherent and defensible version available, but I am still left with some puzzles concerning the compatibility of some of Mohanty's own remarks with the over-all outline of his theory.

Husserl says at the end of the first Cartesian Meditation that transcendental-philosophical "problems" relate to the correlation between consciousness and the world which transcends it.[2] But modern philosophy since Descartes has been dealing with such problems. What is distinctive about the transcendental approach is the way it deals with these problems. The best over-all positive characterization of this approach, as Mohanty sees it, is that it wants to understand this consciousness-world correlation in the most comprehensive way. "Transcendental philosophy seeks an understanding of the broad categorical features of our experience and of the world in terms of the structure of (human) subjectivity..." (p. xvii). The use of the word "understanding" here can be contrasted with both "explain" and "justify". The correlation between consciousness and the world is neither to be explained causally nor to be justified as if the existence of this correlation were somehow in doubt. Husserl, of course, had rejected both of these avenues, and had criticized the great figures of the modern period, Descartes, Hume and Kant, for mixing up the two. But Husserl's alternative to "explanation" and "justification" had been "description". Mohanty by no means rejects the term "description" to characterize what transcendental philosophy does, but his use of the term "understanding" here reflects two features of the transcendental approach on which Husserl himself insisted: first, it goes beyond facts to essences ("broad categorical features"); and second, it must put itself into a position to describe those features in a unprejudiced way precisely by distinguishing itself from and setting aside the very different tasks of explaining and justifying. For this a special method is required, the phenomenological

reduction, through which a "transcendental reflection" can be established, a kind of reflection in which prejudices can be avoided and genuine description can take place.

It is not so much the enterprises of explanation and justification that have contributed to our misunderstanding of the consciousness-world correlation as the presuppositions that lead to them. Chief among these is the concept of mind as a container of objects or events which stand in a relation of *representation* to an external world of other subjects and events. Starting from this presupposition the moderns, both rationalists and empiricists, sought to *explain* how these representation arise and to *justify* or *validate* their representative function. The first step of a transcendental philosophy is to undercut entirely these philosophical projects by refusing to accept the notion of representation itself. This is accomplished by means of the concept of intentionality, only vaguely prefigured in Kant (who retains "representation" in a central but ambiguous position), but clearly articulated by Husserl. The relation of transcendence, the object-relation, is accepted as essential to consciousness from the start, and does not have to be justified or explained. As Mohanty puts it: "It was the great merit of the *radicalized* intentionality thesis [of Husserl] that it overcame the idea of representational consciousness" (p. 61). Consciousness is not a container. It "has no interiority wherein things could be as representations or ideas,...the whole being of consciousness consists of being directed towards an other..." (p. 159). Yet many philosophers have failed to appreciate the importance of this crucial step in Husserl's thinking. First among these, curiously, was one of Husserl's closest students, Heidegger, and it is from Heidegger that this misunderstanding of Husserl's phenomenology has been passed along to others, for example, to Richard Rorty.

Once it is recognized that transcendental philosophy rejects representationalism, it can no longer be classed as *foundationalism* or even as *epistemology* as those terms have been used in reference to modern philosophy. The point is not to demonstrate that the mind does indeed, in spite of all doubts, accurately represent reality, either in general or in the form of a privileged set of representations on which inferences to other knowledge claims might be based. Nor does it attempt, according to Mohanty, to justify any particular body of scientific knowledge, as Kant is said to have attempted for Newtonian physics. In general, "the motive of 'blocking skepticism'...is conspicuous by its absence"

(pp. 61-2). Thus the "epistemological concern is not the predominant theme of phenomenology, even of the Husserlian sort" (p. 61). Phenomenology constitutes a transcendental philosophy that is "non-foundationalist" and "non-epistemological". Further, it does not provide a theory of truth in the sense of a criterion of truth (p. 99).

This account of transcendental phenomenology flies in the face of the standard interpretation of Husserl, both by his critics and by some of his supporters. The assumption is that his central concern is epistemology and the foundation of knowledge. Why is this interpretation so widespread? No doubt the early critiques of Husserl by such powerful figures as Heidegger and even Merleau-Ponty have played a role. Yet it must be admitted that Husserl himself is partly at fault. He often speaks of *Erkenntnisbegründung*, and the language and problems of traditional epistemology seem to turn up frequently in his work. There is no doubt that, in order to maintain his version of transcendental phenomenology, and to attribute it (or at least its inspiration) to Husserl, Mohanty has to overlook many things Husserl said. The point is that, if Husserl speaks at times as a traditional foundationalist, he is being inconsistent with his own starting point, which is the concept of intentionality and the rejection of representationalism.

To say that transcendental phenomenology is not an epistemology is not to say that it is not interested in *knowledge*, of course. If "epistemology" is understood literally simply as the "theory of knowledge", certainly phenomenology contributes richly to such a theory. It describes knowledge-claims and complexes of such claims (theories) with reference to the evidence on which they are based, and to this extent is concerned even with their "foundation". And its theory of self-evidence is a "theory" of truth in the sense that it describes the structural features of the *experience* of truth. But a theory in this sense is very different from the grand epistemological project of early modern philosophy, which sought to ground knowledge "in general" by showing its capacity "in general" for accurately representing an independently existing world. Even Kant, it could be argued, departs from this project by assuming that at least some knowledge exists (Newtonian science) and then asking not *whether* but *how* it is possible. When Husserl introduces the notion of a *transcendental* grounding of knowledge, in the *Cartesian Meditations*,[3] his point is to distinguish it clearly from that naive epistemological grounding sought by Descartes and challenged by Hume. For his part, Mohanty avoids even the language of *how* knowledge

is possible and prefers to speak simply of "what is *involved* in knowledge (as well as in other sorts of experience, moral, esthetic)" (p. 61). Thus a phenomenological theory of knowledge would have no privileged status over a phenomenology of moral or esthetic experience. Transcendental philosophy, as Mohanty understands it, "does not seek to ground a body of truths.... It rather wants to exhibit the genesis of *meanings* in originary experience." (p. 210-11)

If transcendental phenomenology is not essentially an epistemology, what then is it? If we follow an Anglo-Saxon textbook approach we would have to call it a "philosophy of mind", which is part of *metaphysics*. Yet the very same starting point which prevents phenomenology from being an epistemological enterprise prevents it as well from being a philosophy of mind or even a metaphysical theory, at least as those (English) terms are generally understood. I am referring again, of course, to the non- or even anti-representationalism entailed by the concept of intentionality.

Many of the concerns of the "philosophy of mind" have been generated by representationalism, or rather by the metaphysical assumption on which it rests, the idea of the mind as container. Even if the epistemological problem of justification had been solved by Descartes (which it was not), the metaphysical problem of dualism remained. How do the supposedly non-spatial mental objects and events (ideas) co-exist in the same world as the spatial objects and events "outside" it, and how do the two orders interact? It is amazing to think that for a mid-twentieth century philosopher like Gilbert Ryle, Cartesian dualism, caricatured as the theory of the "ghost in the machine" was *still* regarded as the major problem to be solved. And the alternatives for solving it seemed not to have changed since the 18th century: occasionalism or parallelism between the two sorts of substance (Malebranche and Spinoza, revived in various 20th century identity or "double-aspect" theories); or reductionism of one of the two substances to the other. Whereas the reduction of matter to mind was attempted in the idealisms of Berkeley and Leibniz, reduction of mind to matter has been the preferred alternative in the twentieth century. The spatial order, including the biological, was by now so much better understood than before, and we seemed on the verge of including the brain in our general understanding of the body. A single, seamless causal order seemed within our grasp if only the supposedly non-physical aspects of the mind (privacy, incorrigibility, etc.) could be eliminated or shown to belong to the order of appearance rather than reality.

Above all *representation* -- sometimes called "referentiality", "ofness" or even "intentionality" -- had to be made a property of the brain or of physical events in it rather than belonging to a special non-physical realm of its own. In this sense the concept of representation remains the presupposition and the focus of whole armies of philosophers and "cognitive scientists" today.

What is the reaction of transcendental philosophy, in its phenomenological version, to all this? The opinion of many is that phenomenologists oppose the reduction of the mental to the physical, and thus opt for a return to dualism, or indeed that they lean toward the extreme and long-rejected alternative solution to the Cartesian problem, idealism.

But this is to mistake completely the purposes and goals of transcendental philosophy. Its aim is not to solve the Cartesian problem, either by making sense of dualism or by working out an alternative to a dualist ontology. Even Kant's transcendental philosophy was intended not as a solution to the Cartesian problem but as a *critique* of, among other things, the very materialist ontology which reductionism so uncritically presupposes. "Critique" meant simply demonstrating the assumptions on which this ontology depends, not replacing that ontology with another, "mentalist" or idealist ontology.

The same is true of Husserl's version of transcendental philosophy. Never claiming that there is a separate realm of mental representations of an external, non-mental world, phenomenology does not have to concern itself with how two such realms can interrelate, how the mental is affected by the physical or how it in turn causes changes in the physical world. The causal question arises legitimately in the physical world, where it belongs, and the relations between the brain, the nervous system, the body and the world around it are proper candidates for causal analysis in science. On the other hand, acts of perception, thought, etc., considered from the intentional point of view, are not items in *another* world which somehow "erupts", as Mohanty says, within the causal order. "That would indeed be a miracle" he says, "and I have no fascination for miracles. Scientific Nature, I concede, is a causal order, nothing can belong to it and yet not be amenable to causal explanation of some sort or other" (p. 76). Intentional descriptions of perceptions or judgments as acts with their intended objects, their senses or noemata, etc., are not *rival* descriptions, and certainly not rival explanations, of events described in causal, physiological terms. Even to consider them complementary is incorrect, according to Mohanty.

"Intentionality and causal theory *are* compatible," he says, "not in the sense that they supplement or complement each other, nor in the sense that the former is the phenomenal explanandum while the latter is the theoretical explanans, but rather in the sense that the two belong to *two different levels of discourse*" (p. 14). Even to speak of different descriptions of the "same events" is problematic, since it is not clear that the identification of events proceeds by the same rules on the two levels.

If phenomenology is not interested in linking the two orders, it is even less interested in reducing one to the other. Here one encounters Husserl's self-proclaimed "transcendental idealism", of course, and this and many of Husserl's formulations suggest that he is opting for an idealistic "solution" to dualism. But there is an immense difference between *reducing* everything in the world *to* mental representation, and *considering* everything in the world *as* an intentional object. The former, which is approximately what is attempted by the idealism of Berkeley and Leibniz, is a metaphysical thesis. The latter, proposed by Husserl, is a methodological practice. If the latter has an idealist element, that of linking everything to the experience we have of it, it contains an equally important *realist* moment, contained in the concept of intentionality itself, which is precisely the refusal to *reduce* the object *to* the experience we have of it.

By refusing in this way to deal with issues in the "philosophy of mind", by setting aside the assumptions that lead to interactionism or realistic or idealistic reductionism, phenomenology reveals that it is no more a version of *metaphysics* than it is a version of *epistemology*. As with epistemology, "metaphysical" issues do turn up "inside" phenomenology. In Husserl they emerge in the theory of "regional ontologies" in which different orders of being -- the physical, the biological, the personal and social -- are subjected to phenomenological analysis. But no metaphysical theses or doctrines are generated from these analyses.

But does phenomenology not have its own ontology? Is it not the case that the experiences, acts and other intentional phenomena are attributed in the end to a "transcendental ego" to which Husserl occasionally accords an "absolute" status and which is utterly different from and irreducible to the "empirical ego", the ordinary human being?

If Husserl indeed often speaks this way, Mohanty does not choose to follow him, at least if such views are taken to imply mentalism or idealism. "Transcendental ego" could be taken simply as an expression for the human being

considered *as* the subject of intentional experiences. Since the term "ego" indicates a special set of problems within phenomenology, Mohanty, like Husserl himself in his later years, prefers to speak of "transcendental subjectivity" as the realm or sphere or domain which forms the focus of intentional or phenomenological description.

Freed from any commitment to a mentalist metaphysics, phenomenology not only permits but indeed requires attending to the bodily aspects of transcendental subjectivity. "The constituting life of subjectivity, even in its transcendentally purified form, contains a stratum of corporeality" (p. 133). To be sure, this is not the body considered from the physicalistic point of view, but the "lived body" as described by Merleau-Ponty. In general, Mohanty follows the major "revisionist" phenomenologists (Merleau-Ponty and the early Heidegger) in insisting that subjectivity is concrete and situated, not only in the body but also in history and in language (p. 240). Further, he cites favorably Merleau-Ponty's view that Husserl was trying "to locate intersubjectivity within the structure of transcendental subjectivity" (p. 211). Thus, for Mohanty these developments, far from leading us away from the transcendental conceptions of subjectivity or of philosophy or phenomenology, are refinements and improvements necessitated by the transcendental phenomenological project itself. That project, we recall, was to understand "the broad categorical features of our experience...the structure of (human) subjectivity" (p. xvii). If transcendental subjectivity is the field in which meanings, objects and world are "constituted", and if body, language, history and intersubjectivity belong to the constituting process (and not merely to the constituted world), then they must be included in the transcendental.

## II

Such, then, is the view of transcendental philosophy which seems to me to emerge from Mohanty's essays. It is a "de-mythologized" or "de-mystified" version which does correspond to Husserl's own best intentions and insights and which rescues him from his critics' (and sometimes his own misguided) attempts to place transcendented phenomenology in a line of direct descent from Descartes and Kant to view it as yet another version of foundationalist epistemology and/or subjectivist metaphysics. But this is not to say that phenomenology puts forward

some other versions of epistemology or of metaphysics; rather, it is not epistemology or metaphysics at all as these terms are understood in modern philosophy. The emphasis should be placed on the method or approach which permits the best "understanding" of our experience of the world. The point is what Husserl often called a "working" philosophy of concrete analysis, rather than the promulgation of metaphysical or epistemological theses. The epoché and reduction seek to establish a transcendental form of reflection which has its own level of discourse appropriate to the description of intentional phenomena. As we have seen, such discourse is different from, and not a rival to, the level of discourse appropriate for dealing with physical reality including the brain and nervous system.

Yet there are times when Mohanty seems not to be content with such a view, and wants to go beyond it. He speaks of "the wonderful, paradoxical parallelism between the mundane psychic life and transcendental consciousness [which] remains one of the major embarrassments as well as the mysteries of phenomenology" (p. 153). This is the expression of a philosopher who is not comfortable with paradoxes and mysteries. Overcoming them means, for Mohanty, showing that, in some sense, the transcendental is prior. As mundane, consciousness can be considered in causal terms, and also in "human" or "existential" terms, as in Heidegger. But it also "may be regarded as what [it] is in *itself*, i.e. as intentional, as intending objects in the world via correlative ideal meanings", etc. (p. 76). It is "by removing the natural, naturalistic and scientific interpretations that one penetrates into, or rather lays bare, what is [consciousness'] true nature as intentional life" (p. 77). The expressions "in itself" and "true nature" suggest that Mohanty is no longer merely setting aside the bracketing of the physicalist's and the existentialist's claims but reversing them. For the physicalist, the intentional is mere appearance ("for us"), while the physical is reality ("in itself"). For early Heidegger, *Dasein* is the reality of human life; transcendental subjectivity is an invention of the philosophical tradition.

Does Mohanty want to reverse these claims and argue for the thesis that transcendental subjectivity is *ontologically* prior? I believe that Mohanty in fact holds such a view, but when it comes to asserting it and arguing for it he is hesitant. His general strategy is to claim that the transcendental approach somehow contains and accounts for the mundane, while the reverse is not the

case. The causal order, when considered as a meaning-structure, refers back to a meaning-bestowing subjectivity. This remains true even if mental life itself is taken to be embodied in the brain and nervous system of human beings. As part of the causal order, such objects and events depend for their *meaning* upon consciousness in its intentional form. The same is true of the "existential" understanding of persons. "If all meanings are constituted, so also are the meanings (or predicates) 'human' and 'existing'. 'I am a human' certainly represents my interpretation of myself in terms of meanings..." (p. 165). Thus Mohanty argues for "the greater comprehensiveness and power" (p. 165) of the concept of transcendental consciousness over both that of *Dasein* and that of the material causal order.

But notice the qualifications attached to these formulations. "If all meanings are constituted", then we must have recourse to a constituting subjectivity. The causal order "when considered as a meaning-structure" refers back to a meaning-bestowing consciousness. Is it not the case that transcendental subjectivity is required for understanding these other realms only *if* they are looked at with certain specific interests in mind? Mohanty says, in another formulation that seems tantamount to a metaphysical thesis, that "the [phenomenological] reductions provide the means for seeing that consciousness, *in fact*, is not mundane" (p. xxii, my emphasis). But is not the phenomenological reduction precisely the prior methodological *decision* to consider consciousness as not mundane and to consider everything mundane only as a meaning-structure for consciousness? On this view the reduction assumes, and thus cannot "show", the transcendental status of subjectivity.

And what of the other component of Mohanty's strategy, the claim that the mundane is not able to include or account for the transcendental? But certainly it can *include* it, in the literal sense of having a place for it. For the physicalist, acts of meaning-bestowal have their place in the human brain; for the existentialist they have their place in the concrete life-world of *Dasein*. Perhaps they cannot *account* for these acts in transcendental-phenomenological terms; but then that is not their job. Science provide causal accounts and existentialism provides existential accounts. To ask them to provide transcendental accounts would be like asking phenomenology to give causal or existential accounts. And Mohanty readily admits that it neither can nor should do any such thing.

These reflections lead me to question the superior "comprehensiveness and power" of the concept of transcendental subjectivity. Naturally, I am equally far from attributing any such superiority to the causal order or the existential order. *If* one assumes a universal physical-causal order, then of course everything must have a place in it, including acts of consciousness. And the same thing is true of the existential approach. Each depends on a *prior methodological decision* which establishes its domain as universal, i.e., as applying to everything. But the same thing is true of transcendental phenomenology.

Does this "philosophical decisionism" turn out to be another version of relativism, perhaps a Quinean ontological relativity? Mohanty may want to reply by asking: *who makes* such decisions, and what are his/her (its?) reasons for making them? Must it be the *transcendental* subject?

## NOTES

1. Page references in parentheses are to J.N. Mohanty, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1985).

2. Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, tr. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960) p. 26.

3. *Ibid.* p. 27.

# ON TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY

**Margaret Chatterjee**

In what follows I shall largely draw on Mohanty's *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*[1] in an attempt primarily to elucidate his mode of reflection and to raise a few questions. The pertinence of the title of his book should not be missed. Ever since the time of Kant the treatment of the transcendental has been bound up with the idea of the possible, more particularly with the possibility of experience as contrasted with the Leibnizian understanding of possibility in terms of conceivability. To ask about the possibility of transcendental philosophy seems to involve an inbuilt regress. One might attempt to cut through this by raising the question of access. In so doing one recalls a much more hoary style of philosophising where the problematic of access to the *transcendent* is grappled with. It is not for nothing that students sometimes confuse the transcendent and the transcendental for there are even passages in Kant (who, heavens knows, is deadly earnest about the distinction) where the two vocabularies are used almost interchangeably.

To recall Plato is not too wide of the mark, for the whole Platonic dialectic of ascent after all provides a mode of access geared to a cognitive quest of a very special kind. What Plato provides is both a methodology and an ascesis. In a sense there could be no better propadeutic to the phenomenological excursus into regions of being than the Platonic insistence on the *kinship* between the nature of reason and its proper target. The idea of kinship surfaces later in a new way in Husserl and beyond in all talk of amazing parallelisms, counterparts and the like. The radically alien could not, after all, ever be netted by thought. The inherent Copernicanism, inevitable if knowledge is to be *ours*, only appears as a fault to those whose realism requires an objectivity which is *ipso facto* beyond our ken.

Mohanty does well to pinpoint the types of transcendental philosophy which belong to the modern era. The first is the Kantian which draws a clear distinction



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 13–23.

between form and matter and lays bare the various structures of judgement. Mohanty sees Kant as concerned with *truth* rather than *meaning*, a distinction which he takes pains to elaborate when he comes to discuss Husserl. One could, however, speak of Kant's concern as being with the *conditions* of drawing a distinction between true and false, provided that one points out that those conditions are the same for both truth and false judgements. In other words Kant is committed to a coherence rather than a correspondence theory of truth. Does this involve saying that Kant is not concerned with meaning? I am not too sure that it does. Of course the account of meaningful structure given by Kant is not that given by Husserl, but both philosophers find that experience is endowed with meaning thanks to certain activities of the subject and believe that without those activities experience would not "say anything to us". Kant is more surely the founder of the approach which regards subjectivity and objectivity as mutually involved. Kant's transcendental philosophy is propelled by its own special mode of access known as transcendental argument. Kant's philosophy keeps to the classical tradition in regarding the production of arguments as incumbent on the philosopher, and is himself innovative in the arguments he advances. In any case thinking is kept on a tight leash, and he takes it for granted that knowledge of nature is the target of the cognitive enterprise.

The leash is removed by Hegel, and history receives special attention by him as the sphere for speculative thought. If phenomenology in Hegel lays that foundation of a *speculum mentis*, which encouraged Husserl to explore it apart from the dialectical tools used by Hegel, one can also say that phenomenology in both thinkers was fully at home in a sphere of immanence undisturbed by fact. But whatever their anti-scientism, each thinker, of course, had different sources. If we attribute a transcendental approach to Hegel, it must be in the older pre-Kantian sense, an untramelled reaching out to the beyond, into "an ocean without beaches".[2] As for the problem of access this is taken care of by the dialectical method. If access is provided in both Kant and Husserl by an exercise in 'purification', in peeling and pruning, the dialectic virtually involves an opposite mode of procedure, an acquisition of momentum, an accumulation principle (to borrow a term from economics) which carries thought ahead instead of recalling it to radical beginnings. In Hegel's *Phenomenology*, it is not that natural consciousness is shown as able to rise to the level of philosophical consciousness so much as that finite centres of consciousness are not merely finite. Without the

assumption of an infinity immanently at work, the whole enterprise, quite literally, would not get off the ground.

If in Kant the transcendental is discerned as a condition of the empirical and in Hegel the transcendental soars *beyond* the clog of the empirical, Husserl does something yet again different, laying bare the transcendental through an innovative methodological device, the *epochē* and reductions. The Kantian connotation of transcendentality, i.e. dealing with the conditions of the possibility of experience, is, however, retained; so also is the notion of the 'pure' as in some way distinct from the empirical. But, and Mohanty stresses this, Husserl is concerned with the condition of the possibility of *meaning*, not of truth. This condition is none other than the intentionality of consciousness, elucidated through the noetic-noematic nexus. This analysis, no less than the Kantian Copernican Revolution, is an effective way of combating representationalism. Not to be missed also is another link with Kant -- a predilection for the language of correlation. This in fact is part and parcel of the rebuttal of representationalism. Telic movements of consciousness take the place of Kantian conceptual nets. Horizons are given a role in constitution instead of in 'regulation', and strata replace grounds. Needless to say the causal principle has to be abandoned along with naturalism and its theory-laden adumbrations. There is something more to be said about this, however, for Mohanty has reflected on what Gurwitsch called the "ambiguous nature of consciousness", its susceptibility of explanation as well as of elucidation and description in a phenomenological manner.

In the article entitled "Consciousness and Life-World"[3], Mohanty traces back Aron Gurwitsch's analysis of the ambiguity to Husserl's mention of *"wesensmässige Doppeldeutigkeit der (phänomenologisch reinen) Bewusstseinssubjektivität"*.[4] He goes on to elaborate the ambiguity by making a further series of distinctions. But it is to be remembered that these are not to be taken as distinctions *simpliciter*, that is to say, distinctions as a mode of mutual exclusion. Husserl's elucidation of this special kind of separateness is recalled by Mohanty in the following passage: "a parallel correspondence with regard to all and every specifications and corrections, a separateness of a quite peculiar sort and yet not a being-outside-one-another or being-separated-from in any naturalistic sense."[5] A similar kind of parallelism occurs in Kant's subjective deduction of the categories where an apparently psychological account is intended to be 'read' in transcendental terms. The parallel with which Husserl is immediately concerned

is that between the transcendental and the phenomenological-psychological. Already in *Ideas I* reference to 'life' appears, and we seem to have herein a third 'component' which is yet not to be regarded as separate from the other two. Husserl and his successors have struggled with these diverse 'layers', striving to find a vocabulary adequate to express the relation between them, and adequately to speak of separateness without opposition.

When Landgrebe speaks of the anonymous functioning of transcendental subjectivity as the 'same' as the historical flow of life itself, we seem to hear echoes of Hegel, since the dynamism of life/consciousness is shorn of 'personal' elements and is, to this extent, anonymous. The problem is that life is not anonymous unless we reify it beyond recognition. Now the consideration which Mohanty adds is as follows. He says that transcendental subjectivity is not only anonymous world-constituting intentionality but "also the reflection on its own functioning."[6] In stressing the reflecting function Mohanty, I imagine, wishes to focus on a special self-awareness which is, *inter alia*, Janus-faced in terms of past experience and forward-looking in terms of the horizon of future possibilities. At the same time, this reflectiveness (and one could also say reflexivity) is not embedded in historicity. If it were it would be equivalent to the mundane from which transcendental subjectivity always distinguishes itself.

Mohanty often uses the word 'discontinuity' to mark the separateness between the stances he distinguishes e.g. the transcendental vis à vis the empirical, mundane, historical, etc., or, another example, the temporal and the ideal. He thereby uses a much stronger term than ambiguity, the latter suggesting a moving to and fro, something which is now this and now that. I would like to dwell on one discontinuity to which he attaches no small importance, that between reflective consciousness and pre-reflective consciousness. He underlines this in his discussion of bodily behaviour maintaining that "bodily behaviour has no option of raising itself to the reflective level; it is condemned to pre-reflective intentionality."[7] His case seems to be strengthened by the consideration that pre-reflective experience is non-egological and that bodily behaviour is usually taken to be such. But there seems to me to be at least two spheres (and there are probably far more) where the 'separateness' of the pre-reflective and the reflective can be seriously called into question, I refer to sports and to the performatory arts.

I set about elucidating this in the following way. If the constitution of 'body' "refers back to the appropriate structures of consciousness,"[8] does body itself have a transcendental role to play? What stands in the way of granting this is the language of noetic-noematic polarity. It is intelligible to say that body 'has' ('is'?) a noematic sense. But if it has a 'founding' capacity, it must also have a *noetic* role. Let me take the example of playing the piano. Through my fingers, I "perform" a three-part invention by Bach. My fingers are seeing eyes in this venture. If we have to grant the intentionality of lived body, we must, it seems to me, give the body a transcendental *role* (rather than merely grant it a transcendental 'aspect'). We can here draw on the rule character of Kant's understanding of transcendental functions without however invoking categorial/-judgemental connotations. I must keep on playing the passage over and over again until I can bring out the very sinews of the contrapuntal structure. But it is not my hands that do this so much as my very being as a pianist. And, to my mind, this example illustrates another point. We need not fight shy of the 'inner'. The transcendental 'guide' here is the musical 'sense' which unfolds. It is the very *structure* of the music, although paradoxically, the *fulfillment* of that structure is *sound*. When I read the music 'silently' (and one should study the score before playing it), my enjoyment of the sound is inner. If I hear someone else playing something I too play, my enjoyment is very often kinaesthetic and empathetic. I get further mileage out of all this by adding the following. My hands do not have a 'noematic sense' when I play. Rather they are the noetic antennae of my life as a musician. Having said this am I not committed to granting my hands a transcendentally noetic role, and not only my hands but my eyes, ears, feet on the pedal, my shoulders, etc. -- in fact my whole body? One more example. I am arranging flowers. My hands initiate experimental ventures with colours, length of stems, etc. The very movements are part of the art of flower arrangement (or of the tea ceremony for that matter) in the Japanese life-world. What I have learnt has not become pre-reflective nor was it ever such. What I do I do knowingly and reflectively.

At one point Mohanty comments that I do not take "perspectival attitudes towards my body."[9] I wonder very much if this is true. Take the pianist's case again. I often correct my posture at the piano, or look down at my hands on occasion if there is a tricky bit of fingering. Or take a different sort of example. I look in the mirror critically and decide to slim down. I regard a wound with

anxiety and impatience. The Bengali[10] child may hold out an injured finger and remark with a mixture of alarm and pride that "It is bleeding." The whole art of dress shows the manifold ways in which we take up perspectival attitudes towards our body. The body itself reveals perspectival attitudes through stance and gesture. In a wide range of behaviour ranging from reticence to flirting, from ritualised movement to spontaneous overtures of affection, the body has more than a mediatory role. It is, moreover, a presence rather than a cultural object. If we concede all this, it becomes difficult to insist on the separateness of the pre-reflective and the reflective. The reflective is built into the apparently most 'primitive' bodily experiences. I refer also to the experience of "I don't know if I can", which may be more typical of the human condition than "bodily certitude". In this respect, one thing more must also be said. "I can" presupposes "I have tried". But "I can't" is often our experience in unfavourable moments or in the case of injury or illness. I suspect we have erred in associating pain with the pole of sensation. The self-perpetuating nature of pain, its galley-effect, is tied up with the reflective nature of our embodied condition. This incarnatedness was incidentally fully recognised by Descartes in spite of the "Cartesianism" traditionally ascribed to him.

How can the considerations just ventured be reconciled with the transcendental perspective? We seem to need a widening of the content of subjectivity, beyond consciousness, so as to take in "bodily subjectivity", and this is granted by Mohanty. But if we do this, it seems hard to insist on the anonymity of the transcendental, for the bodily is anything but anonymous. Next, if we wish to make such a divide between the pre-reflective and the reflective, reference to the bodily will scarcely help, since bodily experience is often imbued with a deeply reflective element. The wisdom of the body is not just a sedimented dispositionality but a reflective alertness on which we in practice strongly rely. The rhythm between the egological and non-egological is found in a striking form in experiences which are phenomenologically largely bodily, and to illustrate this we need only look to experiences of ill health. The bodily also points up a peculiarity of the relation between the constituting and the constituted, in that what at one moment is constituted becomes, at the next, a constituting factor. This again can be illustrated in our experiences of ill health.

Let us move on by granting, for the sake of this elucidation, that bodies are overtly individuating and that if we grant them a transcendental role ('transcendental' being understood as being concerned with intentionality) we have here

good ground for making out a case for a plurality of worlds. This is something that Mohanty has no doubt seized on. For example, earlier in his book he says, "The idea of pluralism of worlds has come to stay."[11] But if it has, do we still need to talk of general structures of the transcendentally purified life of consciousness? How would one arrive at such structures? Presumably through the *epochē* and by laying bare the common thread by finding out the overlap of the plural worlds. But this procedure, it seems to me, would not necessarily wean us away from naiveté nor reveal anything foundational. I have a further reason for making this latter point. The life-world is often spoken of as the *Sinnesfundament*. But if it is, it is surely a *changing Fundament*. The very overlap of life-worlds would ensure this. Moreover it is often this very overlap that makes us aware of radical *differences* between life-worlds. Let us take an example from the phenomenology of religion. At first sight the distribution of *'prāsād'* after *'pūjā'* seems to 'overlap' with the distribution of bread and wine during the Eucharist. Further investigation and reflection, however, do not make us aware of common territory so as much of contrasting life-worlds. And this is no occasion for lament. The problem is that *any* kind of post-Kantian transcendental approach is bound to set store by the 'general' even when this has been shorn of objectivism of a scientistic kind. The process of purification is bound to leave us with a somewhat 'thin' outcome. Husserl himself seems to have tackled this matter bravely. He did his best to bridge the 'gap' between the transcendental and life, regarding the transcendental ego as 'at work' in all experiences. He goes so far as to use the phrase "transcendental life" in a letter to a student dated December 26th, 1927.[12] In contrast to Gestalt psychology, which highlighted the phenomenon of alternating (rather than coexisting) structures in the treatment of perception, Husserl often spoke of an interpretation of layers, of continuities rather than discontinuities.

Mohanty has joined issue in all these discussions in many ways and, in what follows, an attempt will be made to identify some of his fresh insights. One of his main contentions is that the interiority with which transcendental philosophy was otherwise stamped has been purged of its Cartesian origin thanks to Husserl's noesis-noema nexus. The intentionality thesis saves us from the inner-outer dichotomy. We are also saved from a Kantian once-for-all analysis of human noetic endowments, although we are certainly left with a once-for-all diagnosis in the highly general thesis about intentionality. It is *this* which is

foundational and can be said to be universally valid. This does not give any privileged representation of the world but opens the way for any number of intentionalities which, if we so wish, can be grouped into diverse cultural baskets. An appreciation of this diversity, it must be mentioned, was already patent in the work of earlier German thinkers such as Rickert, Windelband, and Simmel. If Rickert was sensitive to the diversity of value-systems embodied in different cultures, Windelband and Simmel were alive to the uniqueness of separate historical situations. All such factors make for plurality.

And now we come to a difference in point of view between the transcendental and the 'cultural' perspective. From the former perspective, the 'ground' which lies at the back of all diversities is transcendental subjectivity. One has only to recall Kant's expression "transcendental unity of apperception" to remind oneself that transcendental philosophy is always concerned with unity. From the standpoint of *Kulturwissenschaft*, however, this unity, in our own day, is provided by scientific knowledge which, in turn, has become the key instrument for the *transformation* of cultural patterns. The transcendental turn and the scientific outlook distance us from the concrete in different ways, but are *related* to the concrete nonetheless. The 'world-formula' that emerges from the transcendental standpoint remains at a very high level of generality. It gives rise to *theoretical* problems concerning intersubjectivity and communication but leaves the diversity of intentionalities permeable vis à vis each other with no inbuilt nisus towards uniformity. The totality envisaged could be described as "all possible intentionalities", a Leibnizian formulation which is about as far from concreteness as one can get. Even such a general formula does not escape the charge of itself being a culture-formula in that the very idea of trying to include all possibilities is itself typical of at least one contemporary tendency, the recognition of proliferation and radical diversity.

Now Mohanty's reaction to all these diversities, if I have understood him aright (and I am not sure at all that I have), is that transcendental philosophy needs to take on the task of "clarification of sense", meaning by this, embarking on the *understanding* of what is given. In elucidating this he frequently speaks of 'reflection', and it is important to get the measure of what he means by this. It is because consciousness is never fully transparent to itself (something which is further substantiated by the noesis-noema analysis) that a progressive task of reflection is called for. We are in time, in a historical situation, and our efforts

at understanding are always shaped by a corpus of interpretations to which we are constantly adding. But this only shows that "phenomenology and hermeneutics stand in a peculiar dialectical relation to each other",[13] he says. We are both 'seeing' and 'interpreting'. But in addition we are also aiming at self-transparency. And it is at this point that I have some difficulty. When transcendental subjectivity reflects on its own functioning it seems to take time off, as it were, from its world-constituting role. If so, does it not, for the moment, also abandon anonymity? Mohanty writes[14]: "As reflective consciousness, it recognizes its own anonymous accomplishments and open-ended possibilities -- thereby raising itself above historicity." From this it would seem that anonymity continues and a point of view 'external' to experience is somehow attained. Mohanty certainly seems to think that in transcendental reflection a truly philosophical viewpoint can be reached. I would agree that it might be sought, but I am not clear as to *what it would be like* to arrive at it. And there is another problem too. We started with regarding the transcendental as prior or foundational in some way, but now it appears to be a matter of a quest. Let us go back a little.

If the intentional function of consciousness be granted, it seems evident that the sole 'work' of consciousness is constitution. This is the way in which consciousness is related to life. This is how we are able to talk of the "constituting life of subjectivity". But an interesting consequence ensues. If the task of transcendental subjectivity is always constitution, even the higher level function of philosophical reflection will fall under the same rubric. Indeed this is said explicitly by Mohanty in the following passage. "The one-world is rather the regulative ideal which is being constituted through the mutual overlapping, coinciding, conflicting plethora of world-noemata."[15] Now there are many piquant points here. There is first of all evidence of the classical concern of the transcendentalist with unity. More startling is the way the Kantian distinction between the constitutive and the regulative is substituted by the idea of a regulative ideal itself being constituted. There are also shades of Hegel in the mention of conflicting world-noemata, conflict being internal to system. Only here we are not talking of system or systems. Once the Kantian distinction is laid aside, what Mohanty says begins to have a certain attraction. As experience and reflection upon it progress, the sedimented meanings, which the life of transcendental subjectivity accumulates, constitute a growing *a priori* whose horizons can be said to serve as a regulative ideal. These very horizons may help

to remove the sting from the hermeneutic bind to which we are otherwise heirs. However, the open-endedness of the possibilities contained in these horizons is best preserved, I should have thought, by not positing a "totality of possibilities". The regulative ideal can continue to be constituted *ad infinitum*.

So far we have learnt that, for Mohanty, transcendental reflection is neither an advance in conceptualisation nor Diltheyan heightened awareness, nor is it embarked on, as in the case of Heidegger, in the light of death. It has its place within the general structure of consciousness which is constitutive in an intentional manner. The relation of the various noetic acts (of which transcendental reflection is presumably one kind) to each other is treated by Husserl in terms of strata, diverse attitudes, parallels, overlapping regions, inclusion and the like. Transcendental reflection, like other modes of reflection, issues in further insight into connections. Stratum and horizon replace ground and *telos*. The stratum idea, however, is incompatible with the bedrock concept (for transcendental philosophy is supposed to provide us with bedrock conditions of the possibility of experience) in so far as the resources of the metaphor go. There need be no limit to strata. We are fated to an indefinite exploration of meanings. Herein may lie the most 'realistic' facet of transcendental philosophy done in the phenomenological manner. The philosopher should not expect there to be an end to his labours. Problems will not dissolve nor will flags be set up on transcendent peaks. In transcendental philosophy, insight and *jijñasa* alternate; each grows out of the other. Neither would be possible without *Lebenserfahrung* which is the matrix of both.

## NOTES

1. J.N. Mohanty, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985).

2. G.W.F. Hegel, *Berliner Schriften*, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1956), pp. 19-20.

3. J.N. Mohanty, "Consciousness and Lifeworld" in *Social Research*, Vol. 42, Spring 1975, pp. 147-66.

4. Husserl quotation cited in "Consciousness and Lifeworld", p. 152.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

8. *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, p. 130.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

10. I pick out this example for its importance in the sphere of the "phenomenology of language", invoking the overtones of one particular language.

11. *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, p. xxvi.

12. Referred to in the Preface to *Dilthey and Phenomenology*, edited by Rudolf A. Makkreel and John Scanlon, (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1987), p. ix.

13. *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, p. 241.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

15. *Ibid.*, p. xxviii.

# ON THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY: SOME CONSTRUCTION AND QUESTIONS

D.P. Chattopadhyaya

In this essay I shall address myself to a set of questions concerning different forms of transcendental philosophy (TP). Why has the possibility of different forms of TP been explored at all? Why have different forms of TP been justified or vindicated by various sorts of transcendental argument (TA)? I propose to look into the question: why have we yet to find a single TA which is good enough to vindicate different forms (or all forms) of TP? In a follow-up step I shall try to show that a singly universal form of TA cannot be coherently formulated. From this negative suggestion, finally, I shall try to show that the diversity of TP and the variety of TA are rooted in what may be called the interested or value-loaded character of cognitive enterprises and achievements, i.e., the ethics of epistemology.

## I

In the history of philosophical thought, the concept of TP has been mooted in a variety of contexts. Analysis reveals that the problematic contexts which call for different forms of TP are relatable and exhibit some general features.

Transcendentalism has often been conceived as an antithesis as well as an antidote of naturalism. The underlying idea seems to be this: the blemishes or the difficulties of naturalism can be removed by transcendentalism. Naturally the question arises: what are the main difficulties of naturalism which necessitate transcendentalism? It is a widely held belief that nature, including all objects, events, and processes within it, is self-explanatory. If nature is self-explanatory, what is the necessity of looking for a principle or a set of principles to explain it? The response of the transcendentalist to this question is that all explanations are not equally good. By implication, he affirms that the naturalistic explanation



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 25–48.

of natural objects, processes, etc. is systematically vitiated by some or other form of skepticism. In brief, he is opposed to the idea of explaining the natural by the natural. This idea is intimately related to, rather presupposes, a sort of reductionism. If the explanandum, the event to be explained or the problem to be solved, is said to be on the same *level* as the explanans or the explanatory principles, we are destined to encounter some serious difficulties. The problematic phenomenon of nature, which demands of the scientist or the philosopher an explanation, cannot be proved to be logically at par with the theory or the theoretical framework purported to tackle it. Take the well-known example of Newton's "falling apple". Ordinarily speaking, as such, the fall of a ripe apple from an apple tree is not a problem at all. If it appeared, as it did (we are told), problematic to Newton, it was due to Newton's ability to view this phenomenon against the background of the then available physical *theory* of causation. What is the cause of the fall of the apple from the tree to the ground? If the fall is *free*, really free, why does it not go upward? What is specially there in the apple or the earth or both which is responsible for the "free falling" of the apple on the earth? In other words, what Newton the scientist perceived in and through the fall of the apple, apparently a simple natural phenomenon, is not very natural, at least not natural in the sense in which an apple, for instance, is. Roughly speaking, the fall of a natural apple required of Newton to indicate some unnatural, "unnatural" at least to start with, laws or theories.

The same issue may be explicated by citing the well-known example of illusory perception, the snake-in-the-rope. One perceives a snake, gets nervous and sweats, but then in clearer light one closely observes that the snake turns out to be a rope. In this case, the steady perception of the durable rope cancels the temporary perception of the non-existent snake (non-existent at a later moment). This example of illusory perception makes it abundantly plain that "the snake-in-the-rope" is not as natural as the rope itself is. Ontologically speaking, these objects belong to two different levels, one cancelled and another cancelling, one temporary and another relatively durable. These objects, rightly understood, are not only ontologically different but also epistemologically distinct.

A perceived object or the concerned perception left to itself does not ordinarily prove problematic. Implicitly or explicitly, the problem is relational. Compared to sub-human animals, human beings encounter more problems. Confined more or less to its immediate environment, an animal does not feel

disturbed nor does it encounter problems unless it perceives something strange and harmful around it. Not only its problems but also its needs, compared to man's, are limited, largely limited by the immediate environment. The more our human world is enlarged by the growth of knowledge and technology, the more problems and complexities we have to put up with. This common sense view has a theoretical, almost philosophical, implication in it. While animals take a more or less limited and immediate relational view of the objects and events around them, normal human beings are found to take a more or less comprehensive and systematic relational view of things and beings of their world.

This difference between the animal and the human perception of the world is traceable to the difference in the scope of what they can be *possibly* conscious through their perceptions, judgment and inference. According to animal psychologists, certain species of animals can be generally credited with having some sort of proto-judgemental capacity. Since the judgemental capacity cannot be sharply demarcated from the inferential one, we are told, some developed species of animals are believed to have at least limited ratiocinative competence. The main point is that the ability to use concepts and see the relations between them enable one, animal or man, to enlarge and deepen one's world-view. If the problems of Socrates are more numerous than those of the proverbial pigs, it is simply because of the comprehensive and refined conceptual framework with which the former operates. On the contrary, when ignorance is said to be bliss, what is hinted at is this: the ignorant man or animal lives in a relatively problem-free world, because the concerned conceptual apparatus, however rudimentary it might be, does not provide him access to a large and complex set of objects and issues.

Properly understood, even in the comparison between the human environment and the animal one, there is an implicit use of transcendentalism. When I say "the animal's perception is more or less confined to its immediate environment" or that "man's perception of his environment is larger and more refined than the animal's," it is assumed that I have the capacity not only to *judge* the two different perceptions mentioned above, but also to *compare* their scope and quality. Further, the comparative judgment involves use of some higher-level concept(s) under which the said two perceptions fall. In a manner of speaking one might say that man's judgment, even perceptual judgment, must have a conceptual component in it. This concept-embeddedness of perception takes

perception *beyond* itself. This is the essential consideration underlying the rejection of the myth of the given. In other words, nature or any part of it is never naturally given to us, normal and rational human beings. The natural is perpetually haunted as well as tantalised by the transcendental.

This trend of our cognitive exploration may be, and in fact has been, described as an anti-skeptical strategy. Anti-naturalism and anti-skepticism may or may not go together. No necessary connection seems to be there between them. Transcendentalism as an antidote of naturalism need not be always construed as a strategy against skepticism. Even when *scientific* skepticism is blocked or rather sought to be blocked by some or other sort of transcendentalism, the scope of *philosophical* skepticism remains still open.

## II

The questionability and corrigibility of scientific theories may be attributed to the blemishes of the human mind or obstacles standing between the knowing mind and the knowable objects or both. Having pointed this out, the anti-skeptics may plausibly argue that this may not be necessarily the case. The very fact that man may be aware of the imperfection of his mind and obstructive causes responsible for making knowledge questionable is itself indicative of his capacity to get over both and to attain questionable knowledge. This moderate form of anti-skepticism and the related pro-transcendentalism are both vulnerable to the attack of the philosophical skeptic. The skeptic may argue, both conceptually and historically, that the human mind, because of its very finite and fallible nature, cannot possibly attain any certain knowledge and that all claims proffered by the transcendentalists down the ages have, on scrutiny, turned out to be defective, both internally and externally. Different forms of TP, backed up by "appropriate" forms of TA, are being ceaselessly changed, formulated and re-formulated. Historically speaking, this gives one the impression that the perfect form of TP and the accompanying TA are yet to be found. Given this position, the philosophical skeptic seems to be within his right that all the so-called perfect scientific forms of knowledge are perfect only in a very limited sense. Therefore, to consider scientific knowledge as valid and to affirm it as so only in a very limited sense may simultaneously be held by the philosophical sceptic.

I mention this point that unless the weaker form of transcendentalism (TP) is backed up by a stronger form of it, it proves difficult to contain the philosophical skeptic of the radical persuasion. The skeptic points out that the scientific forms of knowledge, ordinarily speaking, postulate or presuppose certain laws and theories of varying generality, and/or axioms and definitions, depending on the nature of the concerned sciences, biological, physico-chemical and mathematical. Now when the functional division of labour between the scientist and the philosopher has well been established, there are very few works of the professional scientists which contain their own philosophical review or what may be called theoretical critique. In other words, the philosophical skeptic feels free to say that, while he recognises the scientific or practical validity of knowledge available in different sciences, he is not prepared to concede that the scientist's postulations, presuppositions, etc., explicit or implicit, are above interrogation.

Referring to the two classic cases of Descartes and Kant both of whom had considerable familiarity with the natural sciences of their times, it has been argued by the philosophical skeptic that their forms, rather strong forms, of TP are backed up by some *questionable* TA's. The fact that Descartes purports to vindicate the scientific mode of knowledge by the twin principles of "I think therefore I exist" and "God is veracious" is not enough to convince the skeptic that Descartes has succeeded in his attempt. The intuitive principle "I think therefore I am" cannot stand on its own. It needs some transcendental back-up principle, i.e., "God is veracious." The philosophical skeptic has assailed this line of argument, an alleged form of TA, in various ways. On the one hand, it has been pointed out that if self-existence by itself is enough to ensure the validity of the scientific mode of knowledge, there is hardly any point in resorting to the intuitive argument of self-existence. In brief, the philosophical skeptic is trying to show that the Cartesian TA is vitiated by the circularity of reasoning. According to him, strictly speaking, all the proclaimed forms of our reasoning used to support different modes of knowledge, scientific and philosophical, are vitiated either by circularity or by infinite degrees. The philosophical skeptic's contention is that the Cartesian TP collapses because its supporting TA is flawed by circularity. He is not impressed by the traditional defence often formulated in terms of drawing the distinction between (a) the primacy (the knowledge of) of self-existence in the *order of knowledge* and (b)

the primacy of God's existence in the *order of existence* (itself). For it is pointed out by him that except through (some sort of) self one can hardly meaningfully talk of the order of existence. But the more radical doubt centers around the nature of the self itself. Is it not elusive?

That this skeptical argument deeply impressed both Locke and Hume is evident from Kant's TP and its more cautiously formulated, *existentially* less committed, TA.

Kant takes Hume's naturalism and theoretical skepticism very seriously. That means, among other things, one could never be certain, at least not *theoretically*, about the existence of external objects out there in space and in the self within. It is a sort of *philosophical* skepticism. Because, *practically* speaking, Hume does not disbelieve that there is an external world with various types of objects in it and that there are mental phenomena like passions, emotions and reasoning. Where he appears insistently skeptical is the *way* of our being sure about the "self" underlying the mental phenomena and some material "substance" underlying external objects. His psychology-based epistemology does not provide him the *access* to either the material substance (matter) or the mental substance (self). It is in the context of access that the naturalist Hume gets entangled. In other words, since the reach of our senses is limited, it is argued, we cannot claim to have known the objects or subjects, if any, which fall beyond it. Within the framework of sense-bound knowledge, the problem of access to "the transcendental" appears intractable.

In his discussion in the "Antinomies", Kant spells out how speculative reason, unaided by sense-materials, is destined to run into difficulties, to generate paradoxes and to get caught in a web of self-contradictory conclusions. It may be recalled here that Hume himself, even after emphasising the limits of sense-bound knowledge, *practically* defended the validity of scientific knowledge, knowledge of distinct objects, and that he took a dismissive or jocular attitude towards skepticism.

Stirred as well as instructed by the empiricist critique of transcendentalism, Kant takes upon himself the double duty of defending transcendentalism against naturalism and justifying the certainty of scientific knowledge.

In the process, Kant realises the necessity of showing that sense-knowledge is not exclusively sense-based, is not only whatever is sensed by someone, some mind, or some self. If this implicit aspect of the "sensible" is not recognised right

from the beginning, then sensibility seems to fall apart in the absence of any coagulating or binding factor. Empiricism degenerates into psychological atomism mainly because it does not recognise any underlying and/or interweaving principle. Once this principle is established, the problem of atomism, theoretical skepticism and all what follows therefrom are tackled as well. At least that is Kant's understanding. This *supposedly* transcendental escape route, enabling the transcendentalist to get out of the cramping limits of sense-bound knowledge, may also be described as the empiricist access to transcendentalism. If the escape route really proves to be an access to transcendentalism, one has reason to hope that one can get out of "scandalous" skepticism and reach some terrain of knowledge. Referring to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, the question may be raised: are we justified in taking the "terrain" as the "peak" of knowledge (assuming there is a peak)?

In the Hegelian phenomenology, the human mind's cognitive ascent to the Absolute in search of certitude ends up in the dissolution of epistemology in metaphysics. In other words, although the human mind looks for the "peak" of knowledge, it gets "nowhere" in the Absolute. The human mind knows or is identified with the Absolute, yet it does not know where it has entered. The finite knowing mind's encounter (if it could be called 'encounter' at all) with the Absolute is an unspeakable phenomenon. Whether this phenomenon is epistemological or metaphysical cannot be categorically spelled out. From one end, that of the knowing mind, it may be described as epistemological. From another end, that of the Absolute, it seems to be metaphysical. Both ends cannot be said to be simultaneously available either to the finite knowing mind or to the Absolute as such. The former, remaining what it is, cannot grasp the Absolute. The latter, in its moment of absoluteness, does not know finite knowing mind.[1]

The Hegelian form of anti-skeptical transcendentalism, although very promising as an access route, turns out to be rather *indefinite* at the end. Therefore, Hegel's programme of removing the "scandal" of skepticism does not appear very attractive to Husserl. Husserl's approach is more cautious, steadfastly earth-bound, follows consistently the cues of experience or life-world, and refuses to be speculative in its bid to reach the "peak" of certain scientific knowledge. In this respect, his phenomenology, though evidently inspired by Hegel, has a distinct Kantian orientation in it. Like Kant, he claims to be always within the bounds of sense. Secondly, he recognises no metaphysics except that

of experience itself. Here "metaphysics" is self-reflective, transcendentally self-reflective, experience. In his more rigorous moments, Husserl sounds critical even of the postulates or Ideals of reason. He refuses to be epistemically tantalised by them.

However, it is to be noted that, like Kant, Husserl finds all the details of experience somehow unifiable. Description of experience proves meaningful in terms of the unity of the details described. When this first-level unity is left behind, and Husserl talks of eidetic unity or reduction of the details, he indicates a higher level of unity. A still higher level of unity is sought to be achieved by our transcendental subjectivity in the form of transcendental unity or reduction. Even at the third or the highest level of unity, Husserl, unlike Hegel, never speaks in terms of any Absolute. The highest level of knowledge, whatever that might be, is not metaphysical. Nor is it finalistic in its form. Metaphorically speaking, it is like a horizon, a growing and boundless horizon. This reminds one of Kant's ideal unity of thought, a unity which remains ideal forever and which, in actuality, is only approximated and never reached.

## III

In recent years, the possibility of transcendental philosophy has been questioned in various ways. For example, Donald Davidson has tried to show the logical impossibility of any Categorial Framework (CF) or Conceptual Scheme (CS).[2] The possibility of CF or CS is said to be dependent upon the dichotomy between scheme and content. Since translation, interpretation, communication and determination of the adequacy or otherwise of these exercises are found to be possible, it is argued that the said dichotomy is false. In fact, we do have different schemes expressible in different languages and can well operate, more or less successfully, with them. The talk of transcendental philosophy gives the impression that there is a unique CS which knows no other equally "unique" CS. This mode of vindication of TP without any supporting TA has been offered by Davidson. Whether he has succeeded in coherently formulating it is being questioned by Mohanty.[3] Davidson's objections against radical relativism and global skepticism, coupled with pro-holism, may undoubtedly be taken as a form of proto-transcendentalism. But this is not the only possible interpretation of his view. In the absence of any strong TA his anti-relativism does not readily lend

itself to pro-transcendental interpretation. The constraints, holism, tolerance of false beliefs to a modest extent, anti-foundationalism, etc., are within Davidson's thought itself.

Neither Kant nor Hegel believed in the principle of tolerance and anti-foundationalism. On the contrary, they wanted to transform philosophy into a rigorous science. For that purpose, Kant followed the method of criticism and Hegel that of dialectic. To the former the connotation of the dialectic is mainly negative, whereas to the latter it is sublative and constructive. Kant's negative dialectic is to be traced mainly to his sharp distinction between phenomena and noumena, between the empirical and the transcendental. Hegel's ascending dialectic could prove constructive mainly because of his doing away with the said Kantian distinction between the empirical and the transcendental. In this respect, Husserl owes more to Hegel than to Kant. But there is another aspect of Husserl's thought which makes its Kantian inspiration manifest. In his methodological orientation Husserl takes Kant as his point of departure. While Kant tries to limit the realm of phenomena, Husserl finds transcendental cues within the phenomena themselves. But Kant's enterprise to exhibit the internal structure of phenomena appeals to Husserl. This appeal is substantive and not merely methodological. Engaged in finding out the principles accounting for the internal structure of phenomena, one finds that their origin and scope, rightly understood, are transphenomenal. The unity of experience is, in a sense, formal and transcendental as Kant suggests. But, in another sense, highlighted by Hegel and Husserl, the unity is rooted in the particulars of experience themselves. Experience neither exhausts itself nor loses itself *in* experience. It goes *beyond* itself. It has "something" in it which does not allow it to be cut loose from the rest of the plenum of experience, from its own objective reference or content.

The same point is explicated by Husserl in his account of the bipolarity, i.e., noetic-noematic character of experience. Although they have their own individuality, the noetic acts of experience are not self-contained and have in them an objective (attentionality as well as) intentionality. However, by explorative attention and intention, noetic enterprises do not necessarily succeed in capturing what the knowing self aims at. Husserl's pro-idealistic works, marked by the concept of constitution and reduction, need not be taken literally. His realistic ontology must not be underrated. For, in that case, it would be difficult to account for the necessity of reduction, unification, and the entailing

transformation or conversion of (experienced) phenomena. The very role of noema, marked by an elemental force of constraint, remains then inexplicable, if not redundant.

The noesis-noema bipolarity may be viewed within the context of the life-world. It is a part of the internal structure of experience held together both by the contents of experience and also by the active principles which attempt to bring them together. The unifying principles have not been construed by Husserl as external to the contents to be unified by them. In this respect, once again, Husserl's difference from Kant becomes notable. The unifying principles, categories and ideals, are not externally applied to the life-world. Nor is the Husserlian *application* a sort of *subsumption*, a subsumption of perceptual contents under appropriate concepts. Unlike Kant's, his accent is not on a subsumption but on an unbracketing of the *prima facie* perceptual contents as preliminary to reduction, eidetic or transcendental.

The concept of life-world, like that of experience, plays a very crucial role in Husserl's philosophy. Life-world is double edged. Or, one might say, like experience, it has two aspects. It has an objective nature or noematic "existence" of its own; it is also the content of some or other noetic act. Noetic acts need not be necessarily cognitive. They may be emotive. Life-worlds are of different levels. Their senses are different. They may be perceptual-objective, specifically pre-scientific, pre-objective, etc. Their scope may be local, global, local-global, etc. In a way, life-worlds are there *in* the world not *of* the world. Put in another way, life-worlds may rightly be construed as a part of our own mental life, embedded in our knowing consciousness, i.e., not external but internal. Husserl's concept of life-world betrays a systematic, but not necessarily misleading, ambiguity. Positively speaking, it may be said, it is purported to save Husserl's phenomenology from the naivete of naturalism and, at the same time, enables it to be critical. In its second aspect, Husserl's account of perception marks an improvement upon that of Kant. Life-worlds, commonsense and scientific, often prove recalcitrant, i.e., cannot be easily subsumed under (what Kant regards) *apriori* concepts. Concepts themselves, according to Husserl, are informed by and imbued with life-world(s). In other words, the life-world is pre-given in our conceptual apparatus, used for knowing, feeling, willing, etc. To put it from the other end, what is known, what is felt, and what is willed do not necessarily

conform to our corresponding modes of consciousness. In this latter sense, they can prove objectively critical of our intentional enterprises.

## IV

In order to vindicate TP, Mohanty, unlike Kant, does not resort to any TA but, following Husserl, makes intensive use of the concepts of life-world and noema. Instead of TA and logical (comparative and classificatory) reflection, he relies mainly on the method of transcendental reflection. In the process of vindicating TP, the users of comprehensive TA tend to uncritically justify it. Regress into increasingly comprehensive justificatory structural principles is intended to decrease the apprehended vulnerability of empirical knowledge. To refute skepticism one need not be a justificationist. The anti-justificationist aim of TP is clear from Mohanty's emphasis on the concept of noematic content. At the same time, in order to avoid the naivete of naturalism, he keeps on highlighting the importance of the concept of life-world, its different levels, and the issue of access. It seems that, like Husserl's, Mohanty's strategy is to make optimal and complementary uses of the resources available within the concepts of noematic content and life-world. In his backward and upward analysis he also liberally uses the concepts of noetic acts and transcendental subjectivity, the dynamic fields of all acts, contents and their intentional relations.

Life-world serves, among other things, the twin purposes of providing access to what is beyond (the transcendental) and constitution of the "unstable" life-world into stable forms of cognitive unity. The bewildering varieties of the particulars found in the life-world are to be structured in such a way that their converted forms could be stably and repeatedly represented to the knowing self. Although the access route passes through the psychological level of our consciousness, through our psychosomatic consciousness, it can go far beyond and ahead of what is immediately (and *not* so immediately) available within our subjectivity. To start with what seems purely physical or purely physiological is found to have in it on reflection some transcendental implications.

In this respect, Mohanty takes due note of the existential turn of phenomenology, particularly the insights of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. It appears to me that Mohanty's theoretical motivation for taking due cognizance of the role of bodily subjectivity is quite in line with his interest in the life-world and noema.

All these three components are intended to serve one main purpose and that is to keep phenomenology earth-bound. If the living and moving particulars of the life-world bring the transcendental direction of consciousness to the empirical level, the noematic contents of consciousness simultaneously feed and keep in check the pro-transcendental direction of consciousness.

As the defender of TP, basically against the anti-foundationalism of different analytic philosophers, Mohanty takes upon himself a double-duty. Firstly, he proposes to show that TP need not be antithetical to naturalism and historism. However, this is not to overlook his reservation toward historism. Positively speaking, he proposes to show that neither natural details nor historical particulars prevent the transcendental phenomenologist from converting them into meaningful, durable and objective unities. In and through transcendental reflection, the physical and the historical assume added significance. What is already known discloses new knowable depths and dimensions. Secondly, going a step further, he claims, in addition, that to re-work on the known materials we must have in us some transcendental capacities which cannot be regarded logically at par with the physical, the physiological or the historical details of experience. Psychological consciousness of the particulars, when phenomenologically reflected upon, shows that the concerned particulars have in them something more meaningful and concrete than what is described by the psychologist. The psychological access to consciousness is not the be all and end all of consciousness. Even more, what is taken to be the access-route can be repeatedly and differently used. Every time we use it reflectively, it opens up new corridors, new directions, but no final exit-route. To re-use the metaphor, the access through the access-route may be endlessly renewed. There is no end to this "new beginning". But the point of interest is that no beginning takes us to any final exit route. The transcendental phenomenologist, in spite of his pro-foundationalism, does not plead for any conclusive, all-comprehensive form of philosophical knowledge. Even in its best form philosophical knowledge keeps on growing, proves explorative and cannot be said to be the "last" philosophy.

To understand the nature of this endless, creative and critical journey, one is advised to look into the resources of the fundamental Husserlian concept of *transcendental subjectivity* (TS). One has to look back into TS to trace the origin of commonsense and pre-scientific concepts, of the scientific paradigm, and even of systems of logic and mathematics. By its very nature TS cannot be found out

in terms of commonsense, science, logic and mathematics. All these cognitive regions for their meaning and inter-relationships are in need of a constitutive-cum-critical transcendental principle. TP tries to serve that need. And the most influential and enabling principle summoned by TP to do the needful is TS and not any Kantian-type of TA. For Kant TA is "committed", rather uncritically, to a particular paradigm of science (Newtonian) and to a particular paradigm of logic (Aristotelian). Rightly understood, the transcendental principle is not itself expected to be partisan in its understanding of any paradigm, any regional ontology. TS cannot perform its appointed job unless it stands neutral vis-a-vis the competing paradigms or conceptual schemes. It is for this reason Mohanty prefers TS to the God of traditional philosophy and religion as the most *originary* principle. If God is said to be the author of the best possible world, as we are asked to believe by Leibniz, then God stands "committed" to *this* world we live in. Husserl's TS is indifferent to the differences obtained between different cognitive paradigms and different regions of reality or different forms of life-world. Keeping this aspect of Husserl's view of TS, Mohanty likens it to the Absolute of Advaita Vedānta. Both the Advaitin Absolute and the Husserlian TS as explanatory principles of whatever is *possible* do not appear to be partisan towards, are not involved in giving rise to, any one particular *possibility* (to the exclusion of others). Mohanty seems to be inclined to place the Husserlian TS above the Advaitin Absolute. For the latter, he argues, is concerned only with the *possibilities*, whereas TS is engaged in explaining or in discovering the fundamental *sense* of both possibilities and *actualities* of all sorts of objects. From commonsense objects like bodies, human and physical, to cultural totalities like language and science, and to social reality as represented in history and anthropology, all can be traced back to the comprehensive and constitutive scope of TS. This "neutral" explanatory principle purports to disclose and exhibit the *sense* of all that is possible or actual. Husserl's TP, as portrayed by Mohanty, mainly address itself to the question of *sense* and not that of *truth*.

It "lowers" its sight from regional ontologies and truths to a coherent unity of sense (of objects) available in different areas of human experience and thought.

On the question of the relation between TS, on the one hand, and history and life-world, on the other, the somewhat contrasting views of Ludwig Landgrebe and Gerhard Funke, two leading interpreters of Husserl, are referred to by Mohanty in this connection.[4] While Funke emphasises the noematic structural

"stability" of the historical life-world(s), Landgrebe highlights the silent and continuous "flow" of TS interfusing and interconnecting different forms of historical life-world(s). The former interpretation draws our pointed attention to the regional autonomy and objectivity of different historical segments of knowledge and culture and the latter interpretation speaks mainly of the open-ended unity of different historical possibilities. Mohanty finds in Landgrebe's interpretation a way out of historical relativism, a preliminary step towards vindication of TP without denying the histority of our knowledge.

Besides *history*, another road-block which Mohanty proposes to remove for vindication of TP is the peculiar ontology of the *body* (marked by its immediacy, physicality, motility, etc.).[5] In this context, he tries to show the superiority of Husserl's view to Heidegger's on the subject. Husserl points out that the human body, because of its situatedness in the world, does not cease to be transcendental. *Per contra*, the worldly embodiedness of man is an enabling condition for his spiritual transcendentality. The human body in the world is not a passive locus for the play of external forces. The human body is itself an active unifying force. Its spirituality and intentional ability lift it further above the world of physical and historical situatedness without snapping its relation with the same. Heidegger appears to Mohanty rather one-sided in his emphasis on *Dasein* as the original mode of being. Existential possibility of TS is not its only possibility. TS, which undoubtedly articulates itself in and through actual human existence, does not get itself exhausted in the process. TS is not purely self-presence. Man has in him not only the life-worlds of the past but also those of future. Self-presence, according to Husserl, is not to be construed as very comprehensive, comprising both the historical past and the possibilities of the future as available in the present. Though histority is a mode of man's self-knowledge, it is only *a* mode. This insight of Husserl is reflected partially in Heidegger's notions of *appropriation* and *projection*. Man exists by "appropriating" other selves, other times (history) and other places ("alien" cultures), and by "projecting" himself into other selves, times, and places. All this he does at present, and he exists in and through by doing all this. *Dasein* is inseparable from *Mitsein*.

Mohanty takes pains to point out that man's self-existence, in spite of its physical character, cannot cut itself loose from the wider reaches of consciousness. In existence, consciousness is captured and focalized but not exhausted. Consciousness is much broader and more comprehensive than existence. In and

through existence, consciousness is available. At the same time, it exists in the contemporaneity of existence. Not only existential but also "non-existential" and other possible modes of world are available to consciousness. From the geological to the historical past, from tomorrow's planned economy to the futuristic technologies, all are available to or, more correctly speaking, conceived and constituted by the consciousness of TS.

The third road-block on the way to TP is put up by language. At least that is a widely shared belief or misconception. Mohanty seeks to remove this (what he considers) misconception as a part of his strategy to vindicate the possibility of TP. And for that purpose he again uses the phenomenological method of TS.

Linguistic relativism, the apparent road-block on the way to TP, has its diverse forms, strong, weak, and not so weak. Often the Sapir-Whorf thesis is referred to in the concerned literature as an example of the strong form. Every language is said to have in it a peculiar conceptual scheme. Meaning and function of the parts of speech or grammatical categories are language-specific and therefore cannot be easily generalised, still less universalised, without enormous loss of sense. The specificity of language does not stand in the way of cultural borrowing. For culture, it is argued, is more comprehensive than language. Secondly, the weak form of linguistic relativism is associated, rightly or wrongly, with the names of Heidegger, Foucault and Derrida. Though language is rooted in the regional ontology of this or that culture, it has its transcendental, *not* really universal, character. This accounts for the possibility of transcultural interpretation, communication, conversation, interpretation, etc. Simultaneously, the non-conclusive or uncertain character of the said operations is said to be due to the regional or culture-bound nature of language. The endlessness of these operations is also due to this culture-specific identity of language. Thirdly, the not-so-weak form of linguistic relativism may be ascribed to the later Wittgenstein. Two aspects of language, (a) its multiplicity as forms of life and (b) its rule-governed objectivity or public character, are seemingly incompatible. But in terms of (b) Wittgenstein seeks to minimise the relativistic effects of (a). To buttress the point of anti-relativism, he makes use of the concept of family resemblance, a weak theory of universals.

None of the above accounts of language is acceptable to Husserl because, he asserts, each clashes with the import of TP. Each view fails to take due note of the meaning-bestowing capacity of TS.

The success of our communicative acts cannot be accounted for unless the objective or publicly sharable character of the meanings of words and statements is duly recognised. Linguistic acts, speech and writing, are meaning-giving. Meaning-giving acts, though, may be ascribed -- to start with -- to this or that person; meanings themselves are objective and have their own noematic structure. On this point Husserl reminds one of Bolzano and Frege.[6]

In and through meaning-giving acts, sound complexes become spoken words or communicative bits of speech. Thus the mental acts are converted into objectively graspable meaning or sense. From *Logical Investigations* to *The Crisis*, Husserl's theory of language shows a continuity and unity. But in his earlier works, one notices a distinct emphasis on the ideal unities of meanings. Though meanings owe their being to meaning-giving acts and expressions, the latter are not necessary to the former. There is a non-relational sense of meaning as well. "There is...no intrinsic connection between ideal unities, which...operate as meanings, and the signs to which they are tied.... We cannot therefore say that all ideal unities...are expressed meanings..., being expressed or thought are alike *contingent*" to the being of meaning. Referring to the theory of truth, for example, Husserl draws a distinction between meanings themselves and meanings expressed.[7] Later on, he emphasises the *expressive* aspect of thinking in language. When the speaker utters some words, his main interest is not confined to the words as such but is directed *through* them to their signification. "The words carry significative intentions; they serve as bridges leading over to the significations;.... To the *unity* of the *locution* there corresponds a *unity of sense or meaning*." In the broadest (sense of the) *concept of thinking*, in the psychic processes, lies the origin of meaning-lending acts.[8] In his later writings, Husserl reiterates his earlier view that meanings of statements may be traced back from the statements themselves to the acts constituting the idealities of their meanings.[9]

Thus one finds that Husserl's theory of meaning has in it a distinct two-way movement from meaning-giving psychical acts to objectively available meanings and from objectively available meanings back to the meaning-giving psychical acts. But the concept of meanings in themselves, coupled with the *contingent* character of their expression, does not seem to have reappeared in his later thought. However, the anti-relativistic contention of Husserl remains throughout. The meanings obtained in language are not culture-bound. Their objective

structures or their sense-analogues are available in all cultures. Understandably, Mohanty takes pains to emphasise the structural objectivity of Husserlian meanings, which must not be detached from their originary human acts. Besides, Husserl's notion of structure is not to be confused with the "kindred" concepts of structures used by some contemporary anthropologists and linguists. To the latter, structures are objects of discovery, whereas to Husserl, they are constituted. Mohanty rightly draws our attention to the relation between TS and the transcendental character of language. The transcendentality of language, though evident in communication, conversation, etc. and traceable to human consciousness, has a strong and far-reaching spring. TS is that spring.[10]

## V

I have some difficulties with this notion of TP and this method of vindicating it. *Vindication* needs to be distinguished from *justification*. While Kant was pre-critically committed to *justifying* one particular paradigm of science, of ethics, of justice, of religion, and of aesthetics, Husserl's TP shows no such bias. The point has been rightly pointed out by Mohanty. But, in fairness to Kant, it may be mentioned here that his TA was purported to justify not only a particular paradigm of science but also several other paradigms pertaining to other areas of human consciousness and conduct. The non-scientific paradigms, the Kantian may advisedly claim, are authored ultimately by the transcendental self itself, and *not* borrowed from some other thinkers. Even then, the critic reserves the right to say that *all* these paradigms justified by Kant are of a closely kindred kind and ought to be certified by the identical overarching constitutive principle. Given this critical interpretation, Husserl's and (following him) Mohanty's point of vindication, as distinguished from justification, remains.

My uneasiness with Mohanty's way of endorsing the vindication of TP in terms of TS stems from the following problem. On the one hand, Mohanty sounds critical of Kant's excessive pre-occupation with the domain of *scientific* nature, neglecting the everyday world of *praxis* and the pre-scientific life-world; on the other hand, he finds in Hume the beginning of the genuine inquiry into the *identity* and *objectivity* of things.[11] That the meanings of things are to be sought in the life of consciousness is also claimed to have been rightly grasped by Hume, despite his atomistic psychology. To undo the negative effects of

atomistic psychology, Kant is alleged to have gone to the opposite extreme, positing the blindness of the *ideal objectivity* of logical entities, senses and truths. Husserl is credited to have struck a middle path between Humeanism and Kantianism, between atomistic psychologism and speculative transcendentalism. Husserl has, Mohanty claims, supplied the missing links between Kantian transcendentalism and Humean verificationism. The whole exercise of Husserl is devoted to connecting consciousness with objects of sense-experience through meaning-giving acts, noematic structure and transcendental constitution (exploiting the resources of life-worlds). If the proclaimed "respect" for life-worlds is genuinely meant, it is difficult to see how TS can successfully disregard their role in its acts of unification and constitution of the objective world. If the concreteness of the world of *praxis* is to be taken seriously, if, in other words, Hume's accents on both consciousness and the primacy of the practical are duly recognised, it is not clear to me how Mohanty can plausibly defend Husserl's theory of TP brought about by TS.

In the name of context neutrality or anti-relativism, TP cannot be allowed to be "suspicious" of the role of life-worlds and the importance of the practical. The welcome intention to leave logicism behind and to espouse the world of *praxis* rather seriously cannot be reconciled with the task of context-insensitivity assigned to TS.

Two related problems are felt here. First, to do away with the blindness of the *ideal objectivity* of Kant, Husserl has offered us the notions of eidetic intuition and pre-givenness of the life-worlds in TS. But what do we achieve by the introductions of these notions? Is the "respect" for the world of ordinary things, pre-idealised objects, vindicated or ensured in TP? One fears and feels it is not. In its zeal TS seems to have constituted a neat, neatly unified, TP. This ideal unity seems too neat to be faithful to the raw experience of life-worlds. I find that the idealistic aspect of TP overlooks the constraints of the givens, of the noematic structures or, in brief, all the "inconvenient" resources of life-worlds. If Kant was wrong in postulating "inaccessible" things-in-themselves, Husserl seems to have committed the opposite error by allowing TS to engulf every *thing*, every *form*, in terms of constitution and in the fancied interest of a spotless unity of TP.

Second, even the sensory or hyletic content of perception, according to Husserl, is said to be the result of an act of phenomenological constitution. In

a sense, both the noetic phase, including its *morphē* or formal structure, and the hyletic phase, marked by its materiality, are ultimately due to TS. All phenomenological contents, real and intentional, noetic and noematic, comprising thetic phase (real quality), thetic component (ideal quality), sense (ideal material) and sense-giving phase (real material), are said to be constituted by the intentional acts of TS. This all-encompassing originary account of the contents of knowledge leaves nothing outside the scope, the unified scope, of TP. In the name of anti-relativism, Husserl develops a system which tolerates nothing "awkward", no "cunning", within its scope. This is not exactly what is expected of Husserl who claims to have rejected the Kantian form of transcendentalism, eschewing all forms of presuppositionalism and depending only on experience and what is available within it. The latter is constituted and, in the name of constitution, it seems to have been "swallowed up" or neutralised by TS.

The only redeeming feature appears to be the notion of "horizonal expansion" ascribed to TS.[12] But the point to be noted here is that every expansion, every content available within the expanded horizons, is said to be constituted by TS itself. Unless it is somehow acknowledged that the *necessity,* which underlies the endless expansion of horizon, is *objective* and *not* subjective, the role of the noematic structures and that of life-worlds get belittled, and even the least realistic promise of TP is not honoured. If the concept of horizon-analysis proves merely supplementary to the concepts of intentional acts and the constitutive character of noematic structures, there remains nothing within and without the ego-pole which could possibly "frustrate" the intentions of constitutive acts of TS. But one could think of an alternative analysis of horizonal-expansion, laying emphasis on the objective constraints and necessity of the concerned acts of the ego. To say that all that is constituted by TS of my self is wholly sharable, if not also constituted, by other selves, is to deny or at least berate the importance of the problems of conflict of perceptions, breakdown of communication, total misinterpretations and the like. To say that all pregivens at all levels are pregiven is to take away the critical or negative effects of the pregivens. If all the input and output of TS could be successfully and exhaustively appropriated by TS, the resulting form of idealism, though remaining transcendental, fails to be critical. On this count not only the otherwise promising concept of horizonal expansion is left idle, but also, what is worse, the anti-Kantian claim of Husserl's idealism proves unsubstantiated. In setting out to explore the possibility of TP which is

well-founded, self-critical and, to a large extent, anti-Kantian, Husserl's programme appears to have badly foundered mainly because of the boundless constitutive and appropriative capacity that has been assigned to TS.

Finally, I would like to draw the reader's attention to the loss of certainty evident in such formal disciplines as logic and mathematics. Of late, we are being told that logic lacks in rigour and that mathematics, strictly speaking, is ill-founded, if not unfounded.[13] True, both Kant and Husserl have tried in different ways to remove the weakness of formal logic and mathematics and show their "higher" transcendental grounding. Neither Kant nor Husserl seems to have succeeded in his ambitious enterprise. It is difficult to take comfort in the idea that the rise and fall of different logical and mathematical systems have nothing to do with the principles which lend them validity. If, vis-a-vis all these systems, TP is equally or comparably indifferent, then the old criticism, the unilateral, uncritical and constitutive character of TS (and of its functional surrogates), can be plausibly reiterated and pressed hard. If the "matters" of consciousness and the "forms" of it are *all* found to be *constituted* and yet, at the same time, consciousness is credited with "boundless" *constitutive* capacity, one does not know how one can show its critical character or interrogative nature. TP, as founded upon and strengthened by TS, knows no external constraint or internal interrogation. Strictly speaking, in the light of my foregoing observations, I do not know how to recognise anything genuinely "external", still less "external constraint". Somewhat similarly, the possibility of interrogative consciousness is destroyed by the boundless "internalising" capacity of TS. Vindication of TP is undoubtedly welcome. But unless it could be shown as a critical enterprise, its claim of superiority over other forms of transcendental idealism is bound to remain suspect. How, being situated as I am in time, can I possibly constitute time? How, being situated as I am in the world, can I, rather my TS, possibly constitute the world? Husserl's way of overcoming this "wonder" or "enigma", as evident in his TP, leaves me askance.

A plausible answer to the above questions may be found out following the cues provided by Mohanty in his stimulating book, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, especially its last essay, "Transcendental Philosophy and the Hermeneutic Critique of Consciousness". Though, time and again, he tells us that he is following Husserl in his studies, I think that his orientation has a distinct critical character in it. One can hardly forget the rich resources and many

facets of Husserl's thoughts, leading to various, often incompatible, interpretations of it. The hermeneutic aspect of Husserl's philosophy, which receives Mohanty's pointed attention, does not appear to be the main interest or even one of the main interests of Husserl. On the contrary, as rightly pointed out by Gadamer, his attitude towards language is largely negative.[14] Besides, contrary to his own professed intention, Husserl is unduly inclined towards scientific idealisation and unification. That these twin attitudes tend to emasculate the flesh and blood of the life-world is clearly acknowledged by Mohanty. His proposed critique of the Husserlian TS is therefore very welcome to me. His reconstructions of Husserl's possible response to the critic's views on *body*, *language* and *history* betray his informed awareness of the influential theories of the analytic as well as the existential thinkers on the subject.

But it is not all clear to me why he undertakes the difficult responsibility of reconciling his own liberal interpretation of the concept of meaning-giving acts as hermeneutic critique of consciousness with the strong unifying-idealising tendency of Husserl. The question assumes added significance to me in the light of Mohanty's claim that, unlike Kant's, his preferred notion of *critique* is genuinely critical and *not* merely justificatory. Even I concede that if one wants, like Husserl, to fend off totally the threat, real or exaggerated, of skepticism and relativism, then one has to underplay the significance of the multiplicity of *languages*, *historical* epochs and human *bodies*. The question, then, is: by underplaying their roles and overemphasising the *constitutive* role of TS do we get closer to the goal of genuine *critique*, the critical critique of consciousness, or do we slide back, maybe unintentionally, to the TA of the Kantian variety?

To say, as Mohanty does, meaning-giving acts are essentially interpretative is to neglect their constitutive aspect. True, he does recognise the significance of this aspect when he recalls Husserl's other two important and complementary points, viz., interpretative acts are born out of some definite historical situation and intend some other equally definite ones. Since Husserl keeps on reminding us that all these historical situations, all intended horizons, are destined to fuse together into a unity, a growing unity, one has to introduce and emphasise the role of the concept of *critical* interpretation. To draw our attention to the interpretative aspect as such of the meaning-lending acts is not enough. For these acts may be (one-sidedly) creatively explorative or monotonously *confirmatory* (resting on a misconstrual of the scientific method of theoretic idealisation).

Unless it is recognised (a) that the historical contexts in which we are situated and obliged to act and (b) that the situations which we as historical agents intend to create do, or possibly can, have *frustrative imponderables* in them, our "critical" interpretative enterprise is destined to end up in a sort of bloodless victory. Mere transcendental reflection and re-reflection can hardly lend the intended critical character to this enterprise. To *radicalise* the character of interpretative acts one has to show how the senses of acts could be really, i.e., objectively, and not merely seemingly, frustrating or non-fulfilling. If, by increasing the levels and extent of mediation, all frustrative sense could be converted or transformed into positive *confirming* elements of a unified and inter-subjectively sharable unity of knowledge, the disclosure of sedimented structures of different cultures or even the minutest sub-structures of the physical and biological worlds could never possibly *surprise* us. One gets the impression that in "due course" everything settles down in its place and all things, taken together, form a non-problematic whole. This is too good to believe. Certainly this is not the problem or crisis situation which calls for a genuinely critical programme for cognitive system-constitution.

Whenever we recognise a position as problematic and a situation as critical, we disclose not only a cognitive attitude but an evaluative one as well. If all our values are in the forms of belief, they are liable to be superseded by the higher order cognitive enterprise, i.e., transcendental reduction. All values are not doxic, passively received or believed. Many of them are epistemic, interpretative or value-bestowing.[15] Meaning-giving acts cannot be totally detached from value-giving acts. On the contrary, the very necessity underlying meaning-giving acts is partly cognitive and partly evaluative. The deeply felt or experienced evaluation influences acts of meaning-giving interpretation. Why do I want to interpret my life-worlds in a particular way rather than another? Why do I recognise a situation as critical or problematic rather than normal or natural?

These attitudes are, on the one hand, informed by some or other life-world and, on the other hand, oriented towards some other will or felt need. Our consciousness which sustains TS cannot be truly described only as cognitive. It is also emotively informed and volitively oriented. This is a point which has been strongly emphasised by Dilthey. Every reductive unification which the knowing mind carries out does not leave it necessarily satisfying. Every horizonal expansion does not prove necessarily very clear and *satisfying*. The quest for

larger reduction or broader horizonal expansion and certainty are all imbued with a will-intentionality. Our acts of knowing are born out of our will to know and this will is expressive of our free subjectivity. However, this freedom of the knowing subject need not be taken in an absolute or unbounded way as, for example, Kant suggests. My will to know, being grounded as it is in a pre-given life-world, and being situated as it is in a particular historical collocation of circumstances, has a distinct *background* of its own and also a definite *aim*. The distinctness of the background and the definiteness of the aim must not be construed narrowly or in an isolated manner. Both my historical situation and projective intention advise me to be in union with the wills and experiences of others. True, the informed advice is not categorically binding upon me nor do I follow it in all cases. But the fact remains that through conflict and cooperation, through rejection and elimination, through suspension and reduction, we are making progress in the field of knowledge and broadening our area of agreement in the field of law and morals. Our deepest life-sense is will-informed and, in turn, informs and orients our cognitive enterprise and exploitation.

The basic point for which I highlight the importance of will and value is to clarify, on the one hand, the relation between our historical situatedness and the expanding horizon of knowledge and to show, on the other hand, the context-sensitivity even of the highest cognitive reaches of TP. To my understanding, TS is a two-way mediating active principle, mediating between the life-world and the transcendental world, and this mediation is never one-sided. If we refuse to see this point, TP fails to be a *genuinely critical* philosophy.

## NOTES

1. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. J.B. Baillie, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), pp. 800-03; see also J.N. Findlay, *Ascent to the Absolute*,(London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970), pp. 261-64.

2. Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth & Interpretations*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 195-98.

3. J.N. Mohanty, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985), pp. xiv-xvi.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-58, 219-20, 240-42.

6. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, "Bolzano and Frege : A Note on Ontology" in *Logic, Ontology and Action*, ed., D.P. Chattopadhyaya & P.K. Sen, (New York: Macmillan, 1979); see also my *Knowledge, Freedom and Language*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989).

7. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations I*, tr., J.N. Findlay, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 332-33.

8. Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, tr., Dorion Cairns, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), pp. 22-23.

9. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, tr., David Carr, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), pp. 364-65.

10. *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, pp. 219-20.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 231.

12. Ludwig Landgrebe, *The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl*, tr. Donn Welton, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 89-102, 123-27, 145-47; see also Paul Ricoeur, *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology*, tr. Edward G. Ballard and Lester E. Embree, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), pp. 97-99; and David Woodruff Smith & Ronald McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality*, (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1982), pp. 267-78, 300-04, 361-62.

13. Morris Kline, *Mathematics: The Loss of Certainty*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); see also Evert W. Beth, *The Foundations of Mathematics: A Study in the Philosophy of Science*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966).

14. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1982), pp. 310-14.

15. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, pp. 151-54 and *Experience and Judgement*, ed. Ludwig Landgrebe, tr. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks, intro. James S. Churchill, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, pp. 51-54; see also Paul Ricoeur, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-41.

# THE PREMATURE REFUTATION OF RELATIVISM

**Joseph Margolis**

## I

In this late day in the twentieth century, reaffirming Leopold von Ranke's motto with conviction, "*Wie es eigentlich gewesen*",[1] cannot fail to be doubly misleading. Ranke, of course, deliberately drew his scrupulous archival studies of determinate "memoirs, diaries, letters"[2] into the encompassing order of indissoluble, plural *geistlich* individualities that could in principle never yield to similar methods; and contemporary historical scholarship, presuming an objectivity of detail comparable with the objectivity of the natural sciences, would completely disjoin, if it could, the meaning of Ranke's words from its original idealist intuitions.

Historically, the first important line of opposition to Ranke's conception of a scientific history lay in repudiating the collectivist spirits that counted for him as palpable individualities, without disallowing hermeneutic or *verstehende* strategies separating the natural and human sciences. That of course marks the essential work of Dilthey and Max Weber and their influence down to our time. What is important and particularly suggestive about Ranke's model -- what in a curious way infects the presumption of Diltheyan scientism as well -- is that it affords a transparent specimen of how to join objectivist and relativist convictions in a plausible (even if debatable) way within a form of historicism. Ranke's plural *geistlich* individualities, apparently cognitively accessible to the attentive historian, signify that *what* is true of different societies must be relativized to the encompassing *Geist* of each, but that truth itself need not be so relativized, need not be construed as restricted to "true-in-*L*" (language *L*) or "true-in-$Geist_1$" or the like. On the contrary, the relativization of human practices within one particular *Geist* or another *is* itself the cognitive condition of objectivity, even of absolute or apodictic objectivity, *ranging over plural, equally*



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 49–63.

*accessible such spirits*. For, on Ranke's view, "every epoch is immediate in God."[3] On that commitment, the relativization of truth claims *within* historicized ages requires a *non*relativized and non-historicized cognitive aptitude by which actual plural *geistlich* individualities are themselves objectively discerned. Ranke's thesis concedes only a sanitized relativism, a relativism defined as a conceptual fragment ignorant of its own place. As objective historians, *we* assign it its proper place among its fellows -- *non*relativistically. Incoherence threatens every attempt, therefore, to detach the dependent relativism thus conceded from the totalized anti-relativistic vision within which alone it functions.

It would be easy but quite mistaken to suppose that no relativism (and no historicism) could fail to be caught in Ranke's trap. (We shall return to this issue shortly.)

It might be instructive to pursue at once the prospects of historical objectivity in terms of Ranke's motto -- and in a small way we shall. But we must break off somewhat abruptly here in order, first, to trace certain deeper options open to relativism that the Rankean story obscures. The advantage of changing direction so quickly is simply that, with the example of Ranke before us, a larger quarry may be more effectively tracked that, in the end, will be seen to encompass the conceptual issue of scientific history itself.

It is difficult to resist the stronger lure. The fact is that the question of the relationship between scientific objectivity and relativism is an issue that has baffled the best minds of our time. Has baffled them unnecessarily, not because the issue is a negligible one, but because its best resolution --intended to save science and objectivity -- has been completely obscured by weaker but more visible options, Ranke's for instance.

One must appreciate the fact that something at least superficially similar to Ranke's linking of *Geist* and the determinate details of archival documents has been entrenched in the theory of the physical sciences, for instance by T.S. Kuhn's conception of paradigms. Kuhn's strategy yields difficulties -- similar to those confronting relativism under Ranke's strategy -- for any would-be objective analysis that falls under a particular relativized paradigm. Consider this point in the light of Kuhn's remarks in the chapter provocatively titled "Revolutions as Changes of World View". After having noted that "The scientist can have no recourse above or beyond what he sees with his eyes and instruments," Kuhn declares that, "as a result of discovering oxygen, Lavoisier saw nature differently

[from Priestley,]...that after discovering oxygen Lavoisier worked in a different world."[4] His remarks here effectively offers us an observational analogue of Rankean archival details infected by an indissolubly holist orientation (yielding "incommensurabilities") of a profoundly historicized sort. Of course, Kuhn believes (in a spirit not terribly different from Ranke's) that objectivity and progress regarding the distributed claims of science *are* entirely recoverable *within* the paradigm-relativized "worlds" of particular scientists -- are recoverable without relativizing truth itself. *And* he believes that there is an objective order of nature that we touch in a cognitive way *through* our paradigm-skewed inquiries, that permits us to sort those shifting paradigms themselves and to affirm the one world within which the changing "worlds" of Lavoisier and Priestley are rightly identified as such.

The parallel with Ranke is plain enough, even though Kuhn demotes his own specimen paradigms to something less than the various totalized *geistlich* individualities Ranke favors. In any case, the decisive point to bear in mind is simply that to admit that human inquiry and cognition are historicized, perspectival, preformed in plural ways does not entail that there *are* determinately many independent cognitive "sites" that *we* can identify objectively (or absolutely or with certainty): such an effort is as much subject to relativistic constraint as the plural perspectives it pretends to fix.

Now there are at least two essential lessons to be drawn from a plausible analysis of this parallel between Kuhn and Ranke, once we agree -- in what, after all, is one of the prevailing convictions of our age -- that not only do narrative history and experimental science *have* histories but *they are* inherently historicized endeavors (like human existence and cognition generally). The full force of this concession, bearing particularly on the reconciliation of objectivity and relativism (in science, history, philosophy), has gone largely unremarked -- partly because of false presumptions of what objectivity would require and partly because of false fears of what relativism would disallow. The required correction is rather surprising, even elegant. It is also ineluctable. It bears on the fortunes of realism; and it helps to lay bare a certain set of necessary constraints on the *use* of "true" and "false" in formulating truth claims under historicized conditions of life and inquiry.

The first lesson is this. Relativism with respect to truth and scientific objectivity need not be construed, either entirely or at all, as captured by a

relativized or relationalized conception *of* the predicate "true"; it may, and in the amplest and most plausible reading will, center rather on the *epistemic* conditions under which *non*relativized *predicates* function relativistically. Alternatively put, relativism is best construed as an epistemic notion first, not as a merely alethic notion or not as an alethic notion disjoined from prior epistemic commitments.

Three possible scenarios need to be sorted here. Relativism may be construed, first, as that doctrine that defines "true" as "true-in-L" or "true-in-W" (where "L" and "W" designate particular languages and worlds separated from other determinate languages and worlds, and where ascriptions of truth are confined within the borders of L or W). It is the relativism or the denizens of Ranke's pluralized *Geist* and Kuhn's paradigms -- who know nothing but what happens to be internal to their own world; that is, it is that condition grasped by an objectivity that sorts just such relativized worlds but is not itself similarly confined. Call it *alethic relativism*.

Secondly, relativism may be construed as that doctrine that rejects bipolar truth values and, in context, replaces such values with a many-valued alternative in which what would have been logically incompatible on the bipolar model may be recovered as compatible under suitable relevance constraints. This is a relativism motivated in a way utterly different from the historicism of Ranke and Kuhn -- in the triple sense of making no commitment to the sort of *non*relativism the denizens of Ranke's and Kuhn's dependent "worlds" favor, or to the relativistic use of "true" ("true-in-W") Rankean and Kuhnian historians require *in order to* sort the denizens of the first option, or to the *anti*-relativism of Ranke and Kuhn themselves insofar as *they* objectively identify the "worlds" of the others in the one (or God's one) world. Our first scenario collects the usual charge that, taken neatly, historicism cannot fail to be incoherent and untenable. But our second option, also formulated alethically, is not directly concerned with either relationalized truth-*predicates* ("true-in-L" or "true-in-W") or with a substantive historicism. It is concerned rather with relativistic truth *values*, and it concedes (it must concede) that (for that reason) it requires *some* epistemic vindication. It is, therefore, an inherently incomplete theory. What it requires is not an ampler (alethic) relativism but a substantive account of the world and of our epistemic access to it, in virtue of which relativistic truth values may be judged preferable to bipolar values in at least some sector or other of inquiry. Call this option, however tendentiously, *robust relativism*.[5] It secures the internal

coherence of relativism by shifting from the formal definition of truth-predicates to actual truth values and by resisting the pluralizing of the actual world.[6] In doing that, it denies the conceptual sufficiency of (alethic) relativism itself. On our second option, relativism is an alethic abstraction drawn from a larger theory.

Thirdly, relativism of the second sort may be construed as an indissoluble element of that doctrine that holds that all knowledge claims are advanced under the holist condition of the intransparency of nature and reality and of the horizonal preformation of our conceptual aptitudes in making cognitive inquiries -- in effect, as an element of the doctrine that holds that that condition is largely tacit, incompletely penetrable by distributed critical claims, and subject (again holistically and as a result of human invention) to emergent, historicized transformations. Call this third option *pragmatism*.[7]

It is probably the historicized transformations just mentioned, articulated in terms of distributed claims, that yield the pluralized Rankean *Geist* and Kuhnian paradigms of the first option. A Rankean or Kuhnian, however, who posits only "true-in-L" claims would, incoherently, fail to provide conceptual conditions sufficient for *his* actual doing so, since the ability to designate the epistemic scope of "true-in-$L_1$", "true-in-$L_2$" and the like cannot be represented *in* any such space. This purely formal constraint is often taken to defeat or supersede all relativisms. But it is too weak for that: for one thing, it is no more than a formal constraint, not a cognitively operative one by which to test competing claims; for a second, an epistemically operative relativism is entirely compatible with an alethic subordination of "true-in-L" to "true"; and for a third, the alethic subordination of "true-in-L" yields no assurance that a relativistic epistemology must also be subordinated to a nonrelativistic epistemology. There you have the clue to the likely failure of all attacks on relativism. Such attacks cannot be coherently defended by either the denizens of pluralized "worlds" or Rankean and Kuhnian historians. It cannot even be formulated by the first, for *they* know only their own "world"; *they* use "true" *non*relativistically. Among the second, relativistic truth claims are necessarily subordinated within (and initially identified only within) the space of a *non*relationalized truth-predicate; so the first option is actually part of an anti-relativism. On the argument, a strong alethic relativism must be *epistemically* defended if it is to be defended at all.

The first option may also be quite uninteresting when applied to the central questions of scientific, historical, or moral truth. By contrast, robust relativism offers a moderate thesis *in the service of* an executive pragmatism. That is, it provides for relativistic truth *values* as opposed to a relationalized analysis of truth-*predicates* (of whatever sort), since it makes no sense to introduce one set of truth values rather than another without explaining how doing that serves our cognitive access to this domain of inquiry or that. Pragmatism is a family of theories of the epistemic sort committed to intransparency and historicized inquiry. It requires *some* form of robust relativism, and it has no need at all for the strong alethic thesis.

## II

We are now in a good position to show how the usual attacks on relativism fail. We are now in a position to show how relativism can employ the very constraint the usual attacks construe as an insuperable barrier against every candidate theory. The required argument introduces the second lesson promised.

In distinguishing between an epistemic version of relativism and a merely formal, bloodless, alethic version, we are drawing attention to the fact that the ultimate defense of relativism (apart from internal coherence) rests with what we can afford to offer as an account of reality and cognitive access. This alone shows that *alethic* constraints are either arbitrary, insufficient, or merely conditional *on* epistemic commitments. Of course, *if* cognitive privilege or transparency obtained, there would be no reason (and no room) for relativism. Relativism is worth considering only on the admission of the intransparency of reality, the artifactual preformation of human cognition, the historicist nature of human existence and thought, and the culturally constructive nature of selves or persons. But these are just the general assumptions of what we have already termed pragmatism.[8] They yield the essential finding that there can be no principled disjunction between the realist and the idealist elements of human inquiry and that distributed realist claims are posited only and always in the space of that particular symbiosis (internalism).[9] They alone make relativism worth entertaining. For, granting intransparency and the historicized nature of human cognition, how (one may well ask) is it possible to avoid what we are calling robust relativism?

One of the most engaging recent efforts to "overcome" relativism (that acknowledges cultural diversity and a measure of historicized existence) has been steadily mounted by J.N. Mohanty. Speaking in a distinctly phenomenological manner -- that is, favoring the Husserlian analysis of subjectivity by which a given domain is first said to be meaningfully constituted -- Mohanty willingly gives up any cognitive pretense regarding the (reflexively) *apodictic* nature of that subjectivity's work and even regarding the actual *constituting* work of any "subject" that could claim to have constituted any particular "world" or domain. This is what Mohanty means when he declares: "The world-in-itself is...a *regulative* idea that guides communication and translation.... I want to understand by the 'transcendental ego' the stance which is *the condition of the possibility* not only of objectifying and critiquing my own culture (my own world); but also placing it side by side with many other possibilities of contemplating them -- these other relativistic structures, along with mine -- as equal possibilities."[10] In other words, Mohanty begins by admitting the eligibility of relativistic accounts of a given "constituted" domain. (Here Mohanty's phenomenology and the noted symbiosis of realism and idealism converge.) Mohanty then goes on to mount an argument meant to show that relativism can and must be "overcome" or superseded. "Cultural worlds," he admits, "refuse to be grounded in a constituting subjectivity."[11] That is the essential concession to relativism all right. The question remains: What should we understand by the expression, "'overcoming' relativism"?

The answer is short and sweet. *If* "the condition of the possibility" of mutually understanding, critiquing, appraising moderately incommensurable[12] or relativistic "cultural worlds" were *external to*, or formed the substantive ground for, our understanding, then the would-be regulative principle posited would have been transformed once again into a (Husserlian) constitutive principle; and *if* the "condition" remained no more then regulative, then it would not become constitutive at all. In the latter case, it could be "shared" by the partisans of the different "cultural worlds" -- but only as perceived from within each such world or only from within whatever consensus each took the members of different worlds to be jointly committed to. In other words, "relativists" would then be free to adopt as a *regulative* constraint the assumption that they could understand the speakers and agents of other "cultural worlds". But conceding only that much has nothing to do with actually confirming distributed claims regarding *such*

understanding or confirming them relativistically or nonrelativistically. It would not have "overcome" relativism, or it could at best do so only by rejecting it. Mohanty's argument shows (by default) only that relativism is quite compatible with the assumption that mutual understanding may well occur across different "cultural worlds". But such understanding does not preclude relativism. Nothing follows regarding the epistemic logic of successful communication, understanding, meanings, the assessment or confirmation of rationality, consensus, consistency, coherence, compatibility, or the like. On the argument, *every* interpreted claim will be subject to relativistic truth values *if we wish*: the very success of naturalistic and phenomenological procedures will be open to relativistic readings.

The only way in which to vindicate the claim just dismissed would require: (i) that relativism be essentially committed to a relationalized reading of truth-predicates ("true-in-L"), that is, that it be committed to alethic relativism; or (ii) that relativism be essentially committed to a strong form of skepticism that denies communication or understanding across "cultural worlds". Mohanty seems to be committed to (i); but we have already seen how alethic relativism fails and how its failure does not affect at all the fortunes of robust relativism. However, he also opposes (ii), since he is quite sanguine about communication across "cultural worlds". This is the point of his careful discussion of how he wishes to adjust the Husserlian account. He acknowledges that "the idea of life-world [is] no more immune to relativistic onslaught: for the cultural relativist, there are in fact radically different life-worlds." But then he adds, signalling how he means to overcome relativism, that "languages have to grow [and can grow, on the regulative presumption] towards mutual translatability."[13]

*That* achievement, however, hardly defeats the relativist. The relativist can (and does) satisfy Mohanty's essential constraint by going beyond alethic relativism. There is no obvious argument that shows that merely satisfying that constraint *entails* "overcoming" robust relativism as an alternative alethic proposal or overcoming a full pragmatism that incorporates such a relativism.

There are in fact only two possible strategies by which to draw the fatal conclusion. Each is defective or inconclusive. Both require transforming a (formal) regulative principle into a constitutive one, and neither appears to be favored by Mohanty himself. One is the strategy favored by Donald Davidson, in short, that conceptual incommensurability is not intelligible. Davidson's

argument depends on the illicit double maneuver: first, that conceptual incommensurability entails nontranslatability and that nontranslatability entails unintelligibility; and second, that (sustained) failure of translation entails untranslatability, and (once again) that untranslatability entails unintellibility.[14] These are patent mistakes that deliberately ignore the arresting fact *of* our (only) partial successes in translating across different (but intelligible) "cultural worlds".[15] The second strategy is the one favored by Jürgen Habermas -- to the effect that mutual communication and understanding entails a universal "rational consensus" regarding the normative conditions of (such) *distributed* communication.[16] But wherever the supposed "consensus" is taken to be regulative, it cannot actually be shown to hold universally; it cannot be claimed to be constitutive for that reason alone; and wherever the "consensus" is supposed to capture the constitutive constraint, it is (even on Habermas's admission) regularly violated by discourse that is clearly communicatively successful.[17]

There are no other options -- which means that Mohanty's strategy for "overcoming" relativism is too sanguine. What Mohanty actually manages to show is just *how* to construe phenomenology relativistically and *how* to reconcile a relativistic phenomenology and a (relativistic) pragmatism. In that sense, Mohanty's contribution is a most important one; for it shows in effect how to flatten the radical opposition between a phenomenological and a naturalistic approach to human cognition and the world cognizing agents inquire into. *A fortiori*, it shows how relativism can be extended to phenomenology.

In a way, much of this was already anticipated in Merleau-Ponty's early insistence on the chiasmic linkage between the phenomenological and the naturalistic.[18] But Merleau-Ponty never directly addressed a full-blooded relativistic reading of the phenomenological method. Mohanty is nearly unique in this regard among all those who follow Husserl more closely than either Heidegger or Merleau-Ponty. What his work shows, though this is not quite his purpose, is the probable ineliminability of a relativistic account of all theories of human cognition -- once such theories are committed to intransparency, preformation, historicity, and contingently divergent cultural worlds. For the Husserlian strand of the tradition has been especially adamant in its opposition to the least concession to relativism -- for instance, in its attack on psychologism.

The convergence of these seemingly opposed endeavors affords an enormous economy. For, pursuing the point of the second lesson promised, we see that the

admission of one world and the possibility of mutual understanding in the context of that (one) world *does not* entail the incoherence, untenability, provisionality, or falsifiability of distributed *realist* claims that, even when epistemically justified, remain logically irreconcilable with one another. Only certain extreme doctrines would entail that. Only an adherence to a (metaphysical) realism (in the sense Michael Dummett and Hilary Putnam have identified but oppose) could support that conclusion, *or* only an adherence to the sort of anti-realism Dummett (but not Putnam) champions, *or* only a cognate form of phenomenology, or the like. Nothing less would defeat relativism. For the realism defined by Dummett subscribes to the (exceptionless) principle of bivalence; and anti-realism (Dummett's anti-realism) subscribes to *tertium non datur* (without exception). Those alethic options do preclude relativistic truth values, but *not* on ineluctable conceptual grounds. What we have termed robust relativism rejects (without jeopardizing coherence) the universal scope of the principle of excluded middle (*a fortiori*, both bivalence and *tertium non datur*) on deeper grounds drawn from the admitted conditions of human inquiry -- freely accepted as well by Mohanty.[19] *Proceeding thus neither favors alethic relativism nor links robust relativism in an entailed way to the other.* In that sense, robust relativism remains a distinctly coherent and plausible option.

It is more than plausible, of course. It is actually inescapable, once we concede the full implications of contingent "cultural worlds" along the lines already sketched. It is the only viable option that can accommodate historicism (once we repudiate alethic relativism), or intransparency (once we reject the disjunction of realism and idealism), or mutual communication across diverging or incommensurable cultural worlds (once we admit the convergence of pragmatism and phenomenology). There is, in principle, absolutely no difference in separating the valid and invalid in the recovery of objectivity in the naturalistic projects of Ranke and Kuhn and the phenomenological project of Mohanty -- projects which initially concede and ultimately "overcome" some forms of historicism. They all agree in repudiating alethic relativism; and they all presume (or so it would appear) that that alone precludes the viability of relativistic truth values within their respective "objective" programs. But the implied argument is a *non sequitur* that wrongly supposes an entailment between formal objections against relationalized truth-predicates ("true-in-W") and epistemically grounded relativistic truth values (that oppose the universal scope of excluded middle).

Mohanty's own extremely scrupulous effort to "overcome" relativism betrays its very ineluctability in the most legible way imaginable. It therefore justifies the closest attention. First of all, Mohanty favors formulating relativism "not as concerning truth, but as concerning meaning."[20] He means by this to avoid the too-easy privileging of "truths" that simply "refute" out of hand relativistic truth claims -- in accord with the practice of a careful phenomenology. Here he concedes the moderate incommensurabilities of plural "cultural worlds" (say, against Davidson and in favor of Ian Hacking), and he remains consistently committed to intransparency and preformation. But within those constraints he proposes "two moves with a view to 'overcoming' relativism":

> One is to connect each meaning-structure, belief-system or theory to an appropriate interpretive act or nexus of acts, "style of reasoning" (Hacking), act of believing, constructive proof procedure (Putnam) or verification procedure (Dummett). Once we establish this correlation, we, as a matter of fact, retrieve a non-relativistic structure, a noesis-noema correlation. This structure is relational but not relativistic; it was [is] not available at the first order level of beliefs, truth-claims, theory-constructions. The "bracketing" enables us to focus upon the belief-system, the theory as such, and to correlate it to the acts which go with it.[21]

Nevertheless, *if* we give up transparency, then we abandon any cognitive privilege regarding the epistemic priority or force of first- and second-order discourse; and if we do that, then the "noesis-noema correlation", the phenomenological "constituting" of a domain that could support objective truth-claims, cannot escape the strictures of first-order discourse even where it "overcomes" alethic relativism (as by positing a unified and inclusive world of "meaning"). There is no conceptual reason given by Mohanty -- and there is none that can be given -- for concluding that *truth claims regarding "meanings"*

*internal to that constituted space will not, or cannot, behave in a way that eludes the principle of excluded middle, that invites or favors the admission of relativistic truth values.* The only possible way the argument could go through would require that the rejection of relationalized truth-predicates actually entails the rejection of relativistic truth values. But that is just the *non sequitur* we are resisting.

Mohanty's second step runs as follows:

> just as the identity of an object is constituted in the system of noemata through which "one and the same" object is presented, so also in the case under consideration the one world -- not in the sense of the totality of all worlds, but in the sense of that whose versions they all are -- may be looked upon as that regulative concept which not only orders the various quasi-incommensurable worlds, but also delineates the path that shall lead us out of a possibly hopeless chaos towards communication and understanding.[22]

This confirms two findings: first, that successfully fixing reference and reidentification "overcomes" relativism in the sense only of achieving, regulatively, an operative use of the notion "one world" that must preclude alethic relativism; and second, that what holds for reference and reidentification holds as well for "communication and understanding". *That's all.*

No one is clearer about this than Mohanty -- though, on the argument, he draws the wrong conclusion. For he plainly and correctly observes that, regarding the series of steps by which the members of different ("various quasi-incommensurable") worlds move toward mutual communication and understanding, there is "nothing in [the argument that] guarantees that there is only one such series." There may be many different -- *presumably relativistic* -- such alternatives. Nevertheless, Mohanty insists: "in any case the result would be the same; there would be in principle a way of establishing communication between [putatively incommensurable cultural worlds], and so of translatability."[23] But

there would be "a way" *only in the regulative sense of overcoming alethic relativism*. Nothing regarding overcoming the purely formal incoherence of that notion bears as yet on the substantive eligibility of relativistic truth values *within* the space thereby defined.

Mohanty himself instructively recommends combining two sorts of transcendental philosophy: one, the Kantian-like project of construing "the constituting domain as [a] source of formal-logical *principles*" (which effectively captures what we have already regarded as the refutation of alethic relativism); the other, the Husserlian-like project of combining that achievement with "an evidence-providing experiential subjectivity and a critically operative normative element" (that presumably would move in the direction of eidetic invariances).[24] The trouble is that Mohanty has already (reasonably) conceded relativistic or incommensurabilist domains of "meaning" at the level of *first-order* discourse. He cannot, therefore, object to relativistic truth values, regarding such domains, at the level of *second-order* discourse as well, once we eliminate alethic relativism. He cannot object, that is, unless he reinstates the apodictic ahistoricist confidence of Husserl himself or unless he reinstates a form of cognitive privilege (in the way in which, for instance, Habermas does) by which he could convert the purely *regulative* principle of one world and one space of communication and understanding into a *substantive* principle of determinably universal meanings and universal truths.

The crucial point is the following. Relativistic truth regarding claims of any kind -- naturalistic or phenomenological -- are entirely compatible with the admission of one world and one space of understanding. The reason is simply that the latter principle is entirely formal, exclusively regulative, never more than holist in import, and completely hospitable to disallowing the universal sway of excluded middle. It is certainly not unreasonable to view alethic relativism as the source of a threatening incoherence that must be extirpated. But the very effort to do that would miss a clearly implicated target if, in the middle of its work, it denied or ignored or neglected to affirm or failed to notice that a more profound form of relativism (often confused with the other) remained entirely untouched by its argument as well as entirely willing to embrace it.

There appear to be no further objections of comparable strength.

## NOTES

1. See Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1983).

2. Leopold von Ranke, "Preface to the First Edition of *Histories* of the Latin and Germanic Nations", in *The Theory and Practice of History*, eds. Georg G. Iggers and Konrad von Moltke (Indianapolis: Irvington, 1971), p. 137.

3. Ranke, "A Dialogue on Politics", *The Theory and Practice of History*, pp. 31-32.

4. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. enl. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 114, 118.

5. This is the essential thesis of Joseph Margolis, *Pragmatism without Foundations: Reconciling Realism and Relativism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

6. This is the fatal weakness of Nelson Goodman's *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1978), since Goodman never links his would-be "actual worlds" to *any* account of epistemic access.

7. This, in effect, is the thesis of the trilogy, *The Persistence of Reality*, of which *Pragmatism without Foundations* is the first volume.

8. A full account is given in *Pragmatism without Foundations*.

9. Cf. *Ibid.*, Chap. 11.

10. J.N. Mohanty, "Husserlian Transcendental Phenomenology: Some Aspects", in Robert Sokolowski (ed.), *Edmund Husserl and the Phenomenological Tradition: Essays in Phenomenology* (*Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 8) (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), pp. 180-181; italics added.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 180.

12. See Ian Hacking, "Language, Truth and Reason," in Martin Hollis and Steven Lukes (eds.), *Rationality and Relativism* (Cambridge: MIT 1982); *Pragmatism without Foundations*, Chap. 10.

13. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, pp. 178, 180. This formulation, it should be noted, is quite a bit more concessive than Mohanty's previous formulation in his *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1985). The relevant passages are briefly mentioned in *Pragmatism without Foundations*, p. 309n37.

14. See Donald Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme", *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, Vol. XLVII. The counterargument is given in *Pragmatism without Foundations*, Chap. 3.

15. See Hacking, "Language, Truth and Reason".

16. See Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. John Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), p. 21. Apart from Habermas' uneasy (and ongoing) labors regarding whether his "universals" are "transcendental" or "pragmatic", the doctrine has dominated his entire work. See, for instance, his "What Is a Universal Pragmatics?" in *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); and *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. 1, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), Chaps. 1 & 3.

17. See further, *Pragmatism without Foundations*, Chaps. 2 & 7.

18. See Joseph Margolis, "Overcoming Philosophical Strabism and Philosophical Diplopia", presented at the annual Merleau-Ponty Circle conference, Villanova University, Villanova, Pennsylvania, September, 1988.

19. See Michael Dummett, *Truth and Other Enigmas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); and *Pragmatism without Foundations*, Chaps. 1 & 7.

20. Mohanty, "Husserlian Transcendental Phenomenology", p. 178.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 179.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

# MOHANTY ON THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY

**William R. McKenna**

J.N. Mohanty has devoted a substantial part of his philosophical career to engaging in dialogues with representatives of various approaches to contemporary philosophical problems. He has done this in order to further an alternative: transcendental philosophy in the form of Husserlian phenomenology. Nowhere is this more evident than in his recent book, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy,*[1] which contains fifteen papers that were either published or delivered orally during the period 1970-83. In these essays, various types of argument are employed, one of which is best described as a dialectical strategy. Here an encounter between phenomenology and another philosophical position is created and used to draw attention to a "truth" presented by that other approach which phenomenology can neither fully accept nor ignore, but which it must assimilate and transform. The resources for doing this are found to be already present within phenomenology, although perhaps needing to be developed and deployed. The outcome of this dialectic is a contribution to the development of a concept of subjectivity that can serve as the basis of a transcendental philosophy that is viable within the contemporary philosophical setting.

In this paper I wish to discuss Mohanty's use of this strategy. But I will not be concerned with evaluating its contribution to the polemical purpose of the essays. There seems to me to be another, and, in the long run, more important aim of these encounters: to contribute to the development of phenomenology by directing attention to those areas where the work of concrete phenomenological analysis needs to be done, if Husserlian phenomenology is to meet the contemporary challanges. Thus my concern will be with the resources within phenomenology that Mohanty appeals to and on occasion develops as he employs the strategy. My plan is 1) to show how two central phenomenological principles underlie the dialectical strategy; 2) to set these principles in an interpretive



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 65–79.

framework that brings out the significance of the use of the dialectical strategy in a way that Mohanty does not emphasize; and 3) to raise some questions about the compatibility of these two principles in the light of the way Mohanty develops one of them. Before entering into this, however, I shall first give an example of the use of the dialectical strategy.

In an essay entitled "Husserl, Frege, and the Overcoming of Psychologism", Mohanty discusses the efforts of Husserl and Frege to refute and replace psychologism. "Psychologism", generally, is the name given to theories which approach philosophical problems from a psychological point of view. The psychologism that Husserl and Frege were concerned about in particular was the attempt to disclose the foundations of logic through an empirical study of human thinking. Such an approach, for example, might consider the laws of logic to be laws descriptive of actual thought processes, and consider such logical "entities" as concepts and propositions to be mental states. Both Husserl and Frege were opposed to this approach, because, among other things, it would be unable to account for the necessity and objectivity which logical laws claim by their very sense.

As Mohanty discusses Husserl's encounter with psychologism and creates another encounter between Frege and Husserl over ways to deal with it, the occasion arises to ask from where the appeal of psychologism is derived or gained (p. 8). It is at this point where what I have called the "dialectical strategy" comes into play. The implication of the question is that although psychologism is a mistaken approach to logic, something valid lies behind it, and that a successful defeat or "overcoming" of psychologism must involve coming to terms with whatever this is. This something is "a phenomenon and an interpretation" (p. 8). "The phenomenon is that such entities as judgements, sets, cardinal numbers 'appear' within a thinker's mental life as 'products'..." (p. 8). This phenomenon, however, is "subjected to a naturalistic interpretation, the result of which is a wrong description of that phenomenon" (p. 9). The mistake is to overlook the fact that these entities also appear "within one's mental life within the same claim to transcendence as things of the external world" (p. 9). Instead of recognizing that they are "irreal" or ideal entities which can be intersubjectively identified, recognized and re-identified, they are taken to be real mental entities, private particulars existing within a natural causal order (p. 9).

The phenomenon of "appearing in mental life as a product" to which the encounter with psychologism draws attention presents itself as something which

phenomenology must accept. But this requires stripping the phenomenon of its naturalistic interpretation, which perhaps even provides a misleading description with the term "product", and then giving a correct account of this "appearing". Mohanty does not point to a resource within phenomenology for dealing with this issue, but, if he had, he would no doubt have referred to Husserl's notion of "constitution", which is actually a title for extensive analyses of non-causal relationship between the real temporal flow of experiencing and whatever objectivities these experiences bring to awareness. But there is still work to be done here, because despite the wealth of analyses devoted to this general issue, the particular sense in which conceptual entities are "produced" by the mind has yet to be adequately described.

Mohanty's interest in the essay is more in the naturalistic interpretation of the phenomenon than in the phenomenon itself. His discussion aims to show that a true overcoming of psychologism does not require the rejection of this interpretation, but, on the contrary, requires recognizing it as an interpretative framework which embodies a particular conception of the mental and of psychological discourse generally, and investigating "how this framework itself is possible" (p. 9). This possibility lies in the ambiguous status of consciousness as being, on the one hand, an empirical domain, a part of the world about which there might be theories of various sorts, and, on the other hand, a transcendental domain, and thereby "the source of all those interpretive frameworks which make theories possible" (p. 9). More specifically, the naturalistic interpretation is rooted in the self-mundanization of transcendental subjectivity by which this subjectivity constitutes itself as "a private, inner domain that is inserted into public, outer nature" (p. 10). So, the encounter with psychologism brings recognition of a valid conception of the mental, the naturalistic, but in such a way that this conception is shown to be on a different and less fundamental level than the phenomenological conception, and thereby it is deprived of the possibility of developing into a genuine competitor. This is achieved by its being incorporated into phenomenology as a phenomenon whose appearance phenomenology can explain, since it is based on a constituted formation within transcendental subjectivity. The means available for this assimilation and transformation of the naturalistic mode of interpretation are the already developed analyses of self-mundanization which must now only be elaborated along particular lines.

Let us extract from this example that aspect of the dialectical strategy which will be the focus of our concern. This is the last step, the assimilation and transformation of the "truth" presented by the opposing position. This move is achieved by identifying the source of whatever is deemed to be of value in the opposing position as a moment or structure of transcendental subjectivity. This identification is the key element of the strategy. While it serves in a sense to assimilate the opposition, both the opposing view and phenomenology are transformed -- the former by having the absoluteness of its claims relativized so that it is no longer a competitor, and the latter by having its central concept, transcendental subjectivity, enriched with new content that needs to be developed through concrete phenomenological analysis. It is this transformation of phenomenology that is my interest here.

The last step of the dialectical strategy is made possible by two principles which seem to me to form the basis of Mohanty's version of Husserlian phenomenology. One of these is the concept of the identity of the empirical and the transcendental. The other is the thesis that "constitution" means constitution of sense. The former principle is more prominent in the discussion above. It is the idea that our mundane consciousness *is* transcendental consciousness, only in the form of a mundanizing self-interpretation. This identity within difference or "seeming collapse of the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental" is, according to Mohanty, "the destiny of transcendental philosophy" that he sees as necessary for such a philosophy to survive within the critical environment that has formed around it. The other principle, which I shall call the "principle of sense-constitution", expresses Mohanty's interpretation of Husserl's claim that consciousness "constitutes" the world. The role of this idea in the use of the dialectical strategy will be explained later. First, the idea itself and its significance for phenomenology as transcendental philosophy need to be explained.

Perhaps the most fundamental claim of Husserl's phenomenology is that consciousness "constitutes" the world. In my view this thesis may be understood as a radicalization of the idea of the "intentionality" of consciousness. Whereas the latter idea states that consciousness is consciousness *of something*, the thesis of constitution turns this around to state that all somethings are, if I may coin a word, "consciousED". This means that anything which *is* for us owes its being for us to conscious processes, that consciousness is, as Aron Gurwitsch put it,

"the medium of access to whatever exists and is valid."[2] The idea is that whatever one might want to mention -- be it the empirical world, an imaginary object, or more abstract entities such as numbers, concepts and theories -- all are there for us and are there as what they are in virtue of processes of consciousness whose inner articulations and modes of interconnection are specific to them. There is nothing that is "simply there", some ready-made presence which we contact best when any mental interpretative activity ceases to function.[3] In short, consciousness, through capacities *intrinsic* to it, is the *universal* means of our having a world.

Mohanty's writings stress this universal and intrinsic function of consciousness by the central role they grant to the concept of "sense". Whether it be the linguistic meaning that allows us to think about something, or the perceptual "noema", whose component of sense (the perceived exactly as perceived -- p. 18) mediates our experience of things, it is his view, following Husserl, that sense has its ultimate origin in subjectivity (p. 215); and that in one form or another sense is the universal means by which subjective processes have reference to or bring to givenness whatever we are aware of (p. 243). Consciousness is interpretative, meaning-bestowing; and the study of the "constitution of the world" involves tracing the genesis of meanings to their last origin -- transcendental consciousness (p. 149).

This view of subjectivity as interpretative seems to be what, for Mohanty, provides the basis for calling phenomenology "transcendental philosophy". However else it may be characterized, transcendental philosophy seeks to disclose the "foundation" for experience and knowledge, to account for their possibility, in terms of *a priori* structures of subjectivity (p. 214).

> [It] seeks an understanding of the broad categorical features of our experience and of the world in terms of the structure of (human) subjectivity which is taken as the ultimate underlying principle, the source of all structurings and orderings, of meanings and interpretations (p. xvii).

Although meant to characterize transcendental philosophy in general, this quote especially captures the aim of Husserlian phenomenology and brings out the reason for its priority over other theories. In this connection Mohanty writes of its advantage even over other transcendental philosophies, especially within the context of the contemporary criticism of foundationalism (see essay 5). For example, Kant's commitment to Newtonian physics and to Euclidean geometry as privileged representations of the world gave his enterprise in the *Critique of Pure Reason* more the character of a search for the conditions of the possibility of truth than of meanings. But since the concept of meaning is prior to and is presupposed by the concept of truth, the Husserlian enterprise is more fundamental than the Kantian (p. 214) and any other foundationalist philosophy that privileges a particular concept scheme. Within the contemporary context, the problem with an approach like Kant's is that critics of foundationalism believe that any favored representation of the world will inevitably turn out to be transcended as human culture exercises its creative cognitive capacities to interpret the world in new ways in the course of history. "The idea of pluralism of worlds has come to stay," Mohanty writes (p. xxvi). It is for this reason that phenomenology with its emphasis on constitution of sense, and through that, its claim to be able to disclose what makes concepts, theories, sciences, conceptual frameworks, even worlds, *as such*, possible, appears to be the only existing form of transcendental philosophy capable of withstanding the contemporary historicist-based critique of foundationalism.

The case of psychologism discussed before provides an example of the way in which phenomenology is foundationalist and of the role that the principle of sense-constitution has in that foundationalism. The dialectical strategy that we saw at work there is a kind of foundationalist argument in that it outlines the steps of the concrete phenomenological analysis that would be required to provide a foundation for a naturalistic psychological approach to mental life. As such, the argument derives its persuasive force from the promise that this analysis can indeed be carried out. First, something about mental life that had been taken for granted is revealed to be the result of an interpretation. This allows the distinction to be made between the phenomenon (of appearing within mental life as a "product") and the (naturalistic) sense in which it had been taken. This move is made on the basis of the general principle that the way anything appears to or is thought by us is necessarily the result of the interpretive or sense-giving

activity of consciousness. Making this move, were it done in the course of a concrete phenomenological analysis, would be to put that principle into operation as a methodological principle, i.e., as a method of discovery. As such it would be a specific application of the general phenomenological method of "epochē" or "reduction", about which I shall say a few words later. Mohanty seems to understand the move this way too, for he says that only by arriving at a transcendental standpoint can one distinguish between the phenomenon and its naturalistic interpretation (p. 10).

Once this distinction is made, the ground of the application of the interpretation to the phenomenon can be critically examined. In his argument Mohanty identifies this ground as one aspect of the phenomenon which is separated from others through an abstraction. This abstraction then becomes the basis for his critical remarks. In a concrete phenomenological analysis, of course, all of this would have to be described in considerable detail. The crucial part of the analysis would be the description of the phenomenon in non-naturalistic terms and an account of the operation of abstraction which shows how the abstracted part can become the ground of the naturalistic interpretation.

Further analysis would concern the interpretation itself. This analysis would follow the outline that the dialectical strategy takes of tracing its genesis to transcendental subjectivity's self-interpretation whereby consciousness accrues the sense of "mundane" and of belonging to the natural order. This part of the analysis would involve the other principle that was mentioned earlier, the principle of the identity of the transcendental and the empirical, and would be the most difficult part of the analysis for reasons which we shall go into shortly. Nevertheless, if all of this could be achieved, the "foundation" for the psychological approach to consciousness would be disclosed in the manner of a transcendental philosophy, i.e., the ground of the general possibility of interpreting consciousness naturalistically would be explained and in such a way as to allow for a critical appraisal of the validity of specific applications of such an interpretation.

The possibility that the kind of concrete phenomenological analysis just discussed can be carried out rests on two assumptions, one theoretical and the other methodological. The theoretical is that all meaning has its ultimate origin in subjectivity, and the methodological is that philosophical reflection can gain access to this universal sense-giving function and can apprehend it in a pure and unprejudiced manner. In several essays, Mohanty has engaged some of the most

serious challenges to these assumptions and has employed his dialectical strategy in an attempt to overcome them. His discussions tend to pose the challenges in methodological terms, although, as I wish to show here, his arguments deal just as much with the theoretical aspect of the problem. That they should do this is inevitable, because, as we shall see, the two aspects are intimately connected. It should be noted that in so far as any of Mohanty's arguments derive their persuasive force from the promise that phenomenological analysis into sense-constitutions can be performed, these challenges threaten the viability of the arguments. This might make it seem that the use of the dialectical strategy to meet the challenges begs the question in some sense, for this use also derives its strength from that promise. This is why the arguments are best understood as ways of directing attention to the concrete analytical work that needs to be done, for only that work can provide the definitive "argument".

Mohanty identifies several "recalcitrant" phenomena: language, body, and history. "Each of these", he writes, "presents a challenge to transcendental thinking, each resists the gaze of reflection and announces itself as an autonomous other. In each case, however, I would want to argue, consciousness can proclaim itself to be the source of this otherness, just because each of these phenomena, taken as an other, is constituted in an inmost feature of what I call transcendental subjectivity" (p. 219). In resisting the gaze of reflection these phenomena "are challenges to the concept of consciousness as *transparent* as well as to the concept of reflection as capable of achieving coincidence with the reflected upon" (p. 218). The two issues here are whether the constituting consciousness itself, in at least some cases, presents insurmountable obstacles to inspection, and whether on the other hand the inspecting *look* might be intrinsically and inescapably prejudiced in terms of what it will find. In the former case, the phenomena are considered to be aspects of the reflected upon, and in the latter to be aspects of the reflecting upon it. The idea of resisting the gaze properly belongs to the former.

The phenomenon of history illustrates the issues well. The reflecting consciousness is that of a human being whose reflecting is thus conditioned by historical traditions, especially, but by no means exclusively, by philosophical traditions. Likewise, the reflected-upon consciousness, being that of the same person, is also laden with modes of interpretation that derive from tradition. In both cases it may be impossible to penetrate and identify the different strands of

interpretation (p. 240). Philosophy may be involved in a "hermeneutical circle" whereby it can only interpret interpretations (p. 240). The phenomena of embodiment and language pose similar constraints (p. 240). So, the one problem is that the reflecting consciousness may not be able to achieve the position of being free of presuppositions so that it does not create but only discovers what it sees, a position required by a foundational, transcendental philosophy. The other problem is that the reflected-upon consciousness may not be able to be excavated to the level where it is the source rather than the product of traditions, where it is the ultimate foundation. The one form of consciousness may not be able to become, and the other may not be able to be revealed as, a pure transcendental consciousness.

As described above, the problem is rooted in the fact that the transcendental and the mundane consciousness are one and the same consciousness. The problem arises because reflection starts out being mundane. It is I the concrete, situated human being who sets out to become something else which I allegedly already am, but as my non-reflective self at its deepest level. It is not that when the goal is reached the two will unite, that there will no longer be two consciousnesses, the reflecting and the reflected upon, but one or the other only. Rather the reflecting will become as free from being conditioned by interpretations as the reflected upon consciousness already is in its capacity as the source of interpretations, namely, totally free. The problem then seems to be that there may be an insurmountable difference between the transcendental and the mundane. Reflection may not be able to undo what its own deeper self creates and seems to conspire to prevent the undoing of. We will see that Mohanty's solution to the problem lies in making what seem to be obstacles to overcoming a difference into necessary conditions for constituting the difference. But, before this can be appreciated, another aspect of the problem needs to be brought out.

The problem as presented above is a methodological problem. It is as if the challengers acknowledge that something called "transcendental subjectivity" is the source of the recalcitrant phenomena and only cast doubt on the possibility of knowing *how* these phenomena are constituted. I believe that the problem can be seen in another way, one that Mohanty's discussion does not bring to the fore (although I think it is implicit), and which will shed further light on the problem and on Mohanty's solution.

We recall that Mohanty wants to meet the challenge which the recalcitrant phenomena present by arguing that "consciousness can proclaim itself to be the source of this otherness", because "each of these phenomena, taken as an other, is constituted in an inmost feature of what I call transcendental subjectivity." But one can ask how this is to solve the methodological problem that he raised. It seems rather designed to answer the question "Is consciousness or subjectivity really the source of these phenomena?" If it is not the source, then the challenge is not merely methodological, for if subjectivity is not the ultimate source of all meaning, it is not the *ultimate* source of any meaning. For the thesis about constitution of sense, in the Husserlian context, is not an inductive generalization which might still hold of some phenomena, even though it does not hold on others. It is rather a thesis about how we are conscious at all, one which maintains that consciousness of whatever is to be other than consciousness must be mediated by sense, of which consciousness itself is the ultimate source. Without our being conscious of it in this way, not only would any otherness not be for us, but it could not even be what it is for us by itself, for what we are conscious of it being can only be made intelligible by assuming that we are conscious of it through a sense intrinsic to consciousness. Whatever is historical, for example, cannot be for us, nor can it be historical at all unless we assume that the sense "history" is constituted in and by subjectivity. Thus the recalcitrant phenomena pose a challenge to the thesis of constitution itself, and more than that, to the very existence of a "transcendental subjectivity".

In my view, that such a challenge is legitimate shows that the thesis about constitution of sense must be regarded as a sort of hypothesis which can only be verified by concrete phenomenological investigations which show *how* all otherness has its sources in subjectivity. As such, it invites challenges of the above sort, for its very sense as a thesis, as just explained above, requires that no phenomenon be overlooked. Such challenges rightfully threaten transcendental phenomenology as a whole. In one place Mohanty states that language and cultures as objective structures are constituted in subjective acts. "This thesis," he says, "runs contrary to a predominant philosophy in continental Europe today. The structuralists have insisted on the priority of objective structures, so that in speaking, e.g., I follow rules that I find, rather than generate" (p. 220). But what Mohanty does not make explicit is that the structuralists are not simply presenting a phenomenon which they believe "resists the gaze of reflection," that just poses

a methodological problem. Rather they believe themselves to be challenging transcendental phenomenology as such. And they are. The response must be just the one that Mohanty outlines in his argument, that the phenomenon of language is constituted in transcendental subjectivity.

However there is a way of understanding these challenges as methodological. Transcendental phenomenology, as the enterprise of producing concrete phenomenological analyses into the constitution of sense, projects as its distant goal the validation of its hypothesis by the actual showing of how all phenomena are constituted in subjectivity. But this goal must be reached through a continual overcoming of naiveties, for the constituting subjectivity which is to be displayed is that of the investigating phenomenologist who, as a mundane being, starts out taking to be simply there all of what has to be shown to be an achievement of consciousness. The general projection of the goal carries with it very little in the way of specifics as to *what* must be shown to be constituted in consciousness. Thus progress toward that goal consists, in part, of a process of discovery of what phenomena need to be dealt with. The phenomenological methods of "epochē" and "reduction" are, in my view, nothing more than processes or struggles to convert what presents itself as just-there and ready-made into a problematic for sense-constitution.[4] The process involves the gradual transformation of the reflecting of the phenomenologists from being mundane consciousness to being consciousness that (ideally) takes nothing as being simply there, and which is thereby freed from being conditioned by the sense constitution which is still effective in the reflected upon consciousness. This, I think, is what Mohanty means when he says that the standpoint of transcendental phenomenology "requires that the philosopher, qua transcendental thinker, detach himself from the constraints of time, history and language and be able to thematise these for reflection." The recalcitrant phenomena pose methodological problems in that the effort to show how they are constituted seems to involve untangling oneself as a reflecting consciousness from the effect of their having been constituted in one's own subjectivity. But this very process of becoming untangled seems to depend upon insight into the process of constitution. The phenomena have been recalcitrant, because the concept of subjectivity as *consciousness*, which has been used in the effort to work out the constitutive analyses, seems incapable of adequately dealing with them. In this light, they appear to be phenomena that are

not constituted in subjectivity and which thus threaten the validity of the idea that all sense is constituted in subjectivity.

The encounters Mohanty creates that involve these phenomena deal with this inadequacy. When he has transcendental phenomenology confront the "existence" philosopher (Heidegger, for example) he notes: "If the 'existence' philosopher suspects the language of 'consciousness', that is partly because he does not want to reduce existence to the awareness of existing, the existing human to the epistemological subject, being-in-the-world to presentation-of-the-world, ecstatic temporality to sheer presence, pre-reflective being to reflective thought about it" (p. 161). Mohanty's solution to the impasse is to make the concept of consciousness described by the right alternatives in this quote yield to another, one where what he calls transcendental "subjectivity", unlike "consciousness", does not have the recalcitrant phenomena only as features of the *constituted* mundane self and mental life, but as aspects of the *constituting* transcendental subjectivity.

This solution is evident in the use of the dialectical strategy. The best example is the encounter with the phenomenon of our own embodiment. Although Mohanty does not always express it this way, the problem this phenomenon poses is the role it plays in suggesting that our own being is fundamentally mundane, and that transcendental consciousness is either itself a *constituted* possibility of a mundane being (pp. 149, 153), or else is, in fact, nothing at all. Corporeality poses this problem because it seems resistant to constitutive analysis if one conceives of consciousness in a certain way, the way Kant did, for example (pp. 161-63). Mohanty poses it as a challenge to Husserlian transcendental phenomenology in several places in his book (pp. 162, 219, 243 and Essay 9). Some resources for meeting the challenge are found in the work of several phenomenologists, including Husserl and Merleau-Ponty (pp. 130, 133), and some of these resources are developed by Mohanty (see especially Essay 9). The outcome of the encounter is, first, a distinction between body as one physical object among others in the world (pp. 132-33) and the "lived body", which is the body as experienced from within where it is experienced as motility and as center of spatial localization and orientation (pp. 129, 132). The latter provides a constitutive foundation for the former and is, in turn, constituted in a "stratum of corporeality" in transcendental subjectivity (p. 133). Both this stratum and its constituted lived body are then used to form the concept of "bodily subjectivity",

which is a unique mode of intentionality, distinct from "mental" consciousness but belonging with it within the scope of a wider concept of transcendental "subjectivity" (pp. 138,164,211). Similar, although less developed, encounters take place with the other recalcitrant phenomena, so that in the end there results "a conception of transcendental subjectivity which appropriates into its texture linguisticality, corporeality and historicity without limiting it to them" (p. x). Linguisticality and historicity refer to *constituting* aspects of the phenomena of language and history that become identified through the encounters. Together with corporeality they form a "concrete field of experience" which, I believe, is what Mohanty refers to with the expression "life-worldly experience" (p. 149), and which he finds to be a necessary dimension of a transcendental subjectivity "that is to serve as the domain within which all meanings have their genesis" (p. 245).

These ideas seem to lead to conceiving of the identity of the mundane and the transcendental in a different way than was discussed before, a way which I think was meant by Mohanty when he referred to this identity as the "destiny of transcendental philosophy." The picture presented by the idea of "self-mundanization" is of an already completely constituted consciousness that becomes worldly through inserting itself into a mundane order that it had constituted. Even if this is not taken in a temporal sense, but as denoting two coexistent dimensions, one founded upon the other, the impression is that the mundane status is somehow inessential to consciousness. But it seems that, according to Mohanty's arguments, a mundane order cannot be constituted by a transcendental consciousness which in its own being is worldless. Rather, a transcendental subjectivity that is to constitute a world must in some sense already be in relation to a world, in relation to it in whatever way the terms "corporeality", "linguisticality", and "historicity" are meant to indicate. It seems to me that they are meant to indicate capacities for being embodied, having language, and being historically situated which do not presuppose any specific form of these. Historicity, for example, refers to a historical "horizon" within which any possible specific life-world could be constituted (p. 151). Thus while it remains true that the mundane life *is* the transcendental life under a self-mundanizing apperception, that apperception is effected *within* a world-relatedness rather than being a process which *effects* world-relatedness.

Yet, as much as this result gets affirmed in his essays, Mohanty also continues to maintain that there is a dimension to transcendental subjectivity which is constitutional prior to life-worldly experience and which is the ultimate origin of sense (p. 151). Within the interpretation presented here, we can understand the reasons for this as follows. The task of showing how body, language, and history are constituted should be greatly facilitated if research is directed to the constituting dimensions of transcendental subjectivity to which Mohanty's work draws our attention. The hypothesis which sets the program of transcendental phenomenology should get closer to validation. The reflecting consciousness should be able to move closer to overcoming its naiveties through its work in constitutive analyses. But has the recalcitrance been completely removed? While it has been overcome in one sense, in another it has been shifted to a different locus. Life-worldly experience, Mohanty tells us, "cannot be brought to reflective self-evidence. (A pure descriptive phenomenology of life-world thus, by its very nature, is liable to suspicion)" (p. 150). There lies here a new threat to the validity of the hypothesis. If, however, the ultimate source of sense were not life-worldly experience, but a mode of subjectivity free of corporeality, linguisticality and historicity, and were accessible to reflection, then there could be some hope of validating the hypothesis.

Mohanty's thoughts seem to press in just this direction. Consciousness is not exhausted by its linguisticality, he claims (p. 245). "Not only is the consciousness of speaking not itself a speaking consciousness, what is more: the grasp of meanings continually exceeds the bounds of language insofar as one searches for the appropriate expression for a thought one has his grips on, or experiences the inadequacy of an available expression to express a given thought" (p. 245). He thus posits a source of conceptual meaning qua conceptual meaning which is beyond the stratum of linguisticality. Likewise he seems to trace historicity to the structures of "inner time consciousness", a dimension of transcendental consciousness explored by Husserl which constitutes the present, pastness and futurity of mental life. Whether these phenomena can be connected in the way Mohanty indicates requires further analysis, but they are certainly fruitful avenues to explore. Only in the case of corporeality does he seem not to search for an underlying dimension. This is probably because he wants firmly to resist reducing bodily subjectivity to "mental" consciousness and to maintain that bodily subjectivity is a distinct source of meaning. However, he recognizes that it constitutes "sense" only in some extended use of that term (p. 152). With all of

these suggestions there is space for many new encounters to aid in directing phenomenological research. In the end, they seem to all be manifestations of what appears to be a conflict between the two principles which shape Mohanty's version of Husserlian phenomenology, a basic conflict which, I believe, provides source of the movement of his dialectical strategy and thus of much of his philosophical work.

## NOTES

1. J.N. Mohanty, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985). All references to this text are cited in the body of my essay.

2. Aron Gurwitsch, *The Field of Consciousness* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1964), p.166.

3. William R. McKenna, *Husserl's 'Introductions to Phenomenology': Interpretation and Critique* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), pp. 6-8.

4. See *Ibid.*, p. 224-26.

# TRANSCENDENTAL "I"

**David Woodruff Smith**

## East/West

East was East and West was West but today we are one. Increasingly, inescapably, one planet, one history, one economy, one culture -- the Many in the One. Oneness: the central vision of ancient India.

Professor Mohanty is remarkable: an Indian philosopher doing Continental European phenomenology at home in the midst of Anglo-American analytic philosophy. But that is a view from North America, an ethnocentric view defined by the boundaries of "Continental" (French and German) philosophy, "analytic" (Anglo-American or, to German speakers, "Anglosaxon") philosophy, and -- most "other" of all in the West -- "Eastern" (Indian, Chinese and Japanese) philosophy. Jitendra Mohanty transcends these cultural-ideological limitations, simply doing good philosophy, drawing on Indian, European, or American thought wherever relevant.

Transcendental philosophy in particular cuts across East and West. Today transcendental philosophy is out of fashion in the West, in both Continental European and Anglo-American academic circles.[1] But this day is only a blink of an eye in the span of history called philosophy, from Buddha to Socrates to those writing today. Mohanty has explored the possibility of transcendental philosophy today,[2] and in a sympathetic spirit I shall pursue a particular question in the context of transcendental philosophy, that of the self, the ego or "I".

## Transcendental Philosophy

The term 'transcendental philosophy' in the West is most closely associated with Kant's philosophy and with Husserl's phenomenology. In Kant, "transcendental" philosophy is concerned with the necessary conditions of the possibility of



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 81–91.

experience as we know it. The central problematic concerns the relation between "phenomena", or things-as-they-appear, and "noumena", or things-as-they-are-in-themselves. In Twentieth Century Anglo-American analytic philosophy, the question drawn from Kantian philosophy has often been the question whether there is a distinctive form of inference, or "transcendental argument", leading from claims about experience to conclusions about the conditions of the possibility of experience, or about the world "beyond" experience. But in Twentieth Century Continental European philosophy, Kantian issues arose rather in connection with phenomenology, which we may define as the study of conscious experience as lived, including the ways things "appear" to us, hence "phenomena" in the Kantian sense.

In phenomenology the peculiarly "transcendental" question was often that of method: how to study "pure" experience by "transcendental reflection". This was not a form of inference or argument, but a kind of observation and reflection on experience, which Husserl proposed to carry out by the technique of "transcendental reduction", by "bracketing" assumptions about the external world in order to study structures of experience. Many phenomenologists have insisted that metaphysics or ontology is beyond phenomenology, much as Zen Buddhists have remained neutral about the metaphysics beyond Zen practice. However, when one wants to pursue the ontology rather than the practice of either phenomenological reflection or Zen meditation, then it is perfectly consistent to form and defend, by appropriate forms of argument, assumptions about the world beyond "pure" experience.

The question I wish to explore here is: What kind of ontology of the self or "I" is possible -- and perhaps even plausible -- within transcendental philosophy and, specifically, phenomenology? I shall delineate such an ontology -- an existence proof of its possibility.

## The "I", Transcendental and Mundane

In Husserl's *Ideas*, the archetypal "transcendental" text of Western phenomenology, there is a remarkable passage in which Husserl says the "pure" or "transcendental" ego is *identical* with the "human being, ...[an] object like others in the natural world." This passage carries very specific ontological commitments about the self.

The passage is found in §33 of *Ideas* (Volume I), which is titled "Intimation Concerning 'Pure' or 'Transcendental Consciousness' as Phenomenological Residuum".[3] Husserl has just explained his method of epochē: "*We put out of action the general thesis which belongs to the essence of the natural standpoint*," (§32, p. 110), i.e., the thesis that there is a natural world about us. Now he asks, "*what can remain over when the whole world is bracketed, including ourselves [uns Menschen] and all our thinking (cogitare)*" (§33, p. 112)? His answer, resting on a key observation, is unfolded as follows (pp. 112-113, with changes in translation of the final sentence):

> ...[W]e observe that it is from *the* Ego *[Ich]*, *the* consciousness, *the* experience as given to us from the natural standpoint, that we take our start. I, the real human being *[Mensch]*, am a real object like others in the natural world. I carry out *cogitationes*, "acts of consciousness" in both a narrower and a wider sense, and these acts, as belonging to this human subject, are events in the same natural world.... Thus we fix our eyes steadily upon the sphere of Consciousness, with the "Ego" ["Ich"] inseparable from it, and study what it is that we find immanent in *it*.... Therewith the sphere of pure consciousness, along with that which is inseparable from it (thereunder the "pure Ego *[Ich]*"), remains over as a "*phenomenological residuum*", as a region of Being *[Seinsregion]* which is in principle unique, and can become in fact the field of a new, in principle new, science of consciousness, i.e., the science of Phenomenology.

He explains (p. 113) that "entrenched in the natural standpoint as we are even in our scientific thinking,... we take all these data of psychological reflexion as

real world-events, as the experiences *(Erlebnisse)* of animal beings." These events in the natural world are experiences or acts of "consciousness" "in its *widest connotation*" (p. 113); "pure experiences", or acts of "pure consciousness", are then acts of "consciousness" "in the narrower sense".[4] Pure consciousness he says may also be called *"transcendental consciousness"*, and epochē may be called *"transcendental epochē"* (p. 114), and elsewhere (p. 14) he calls the "pure Ego" the "transcendental Ego".[5] (Husserl does not here explain *why* the term 'transcendental' is appropriate for "pure experiences", the "pure Ego", or the epochē). He will go on to say (§34) that the *essence* of (pure) consciousness -- especially "the essential nature of the 'consciousness of something'" (p. 115), i.e., intentionality -- is the "theme of inquiry" in the new science of phenomenology. And he has already said (p. 113, amidst the last quoted paragraph) that we are seeking "a certain general insight into the essence of *consciousness in general,* and quite specifically also of consciousness, so far as in and through its essential Being, the 'natural' fact-world comes to be known."

All readers will agree that Husserl's method of epochē is designed to focus phenomenological reflection on pure consciousness, revealing its intentionality, consisting in a pure subject or "I" having a consciousness "of" something. What is remarkable about the above passage is the detailed ontology it invokes, an ontology of "essences" and "regions of Being" and a rejection of Cartesian mind-body dualism as well as classical idealism and materialism.

The rejection of dualism is implicit in the emphasis opening the quotation: "*the* Ego *[Ich]*, *the* consciousness, *the* experience as given to us from the natural standpoint." And it is explicit in the next sentences: "I, the real human being, am a real object like others in the natural world. I carry out...'acts of consciousness'..., and these acts, as belonging to this human subject, are events of the same natural world." Why is this a rejection of dualism? Because one might have thought that Husserl's epochē was designed to separate the mental from the physical: the purely mental subject from his or her body, and the purely mental experience from its physical realization or causal correlate in the brain. Yet Husserl, in these sentences, explicitly identifies the "pure" Ego or I with the bodily human being: there is only one entity, "*the* Ego", though it may be "given" differently from the natural and transcendental standpoints. And

similarly, he identifies "pure" experiences with "events of the same natural world", presumably events in the human nervous system.

Yet if materialism would subsume mental events and mental subjects under the physical, counting the mental "really" among the physical, then Husserl's position is not materialism. And similarly, if idealism would subsume the physical under the mental, then neither is his position idealism.

But if the "pure" I is *identical* with the "human" or "natural" I and "pure" experiences are identical with their neural or "natural" realizations, what does Husserl mean to *distinguish* here by the terms 'pure' and 'natural'? The answer lies in his doctrine of essences.

## An Ontology of Essences

The first chapter of *Ideas*, called "Fact and Essence" *(Tatsache und Wesen)*, lays out a detailed ontology of essences (sometimes called "Eidos"). And that doctrine of essences is not suspended but presupposed in the practice of epochē. For, as we noted, Husserl explicitly says that in carrying out the epochē one is seeking insight into the *essence* of consciousness, including its intentionality and its subject, the Ego or I.

In that first chapter, Husserl distinguishes concrete entities in the realm of "fact" from abstract entities in the realm of "essence" (§2). As for Aristotle, the one cannot exist without the other. All essences fall into a "genus-species" hierarchy (§12). Falling under essences are "individuals", or rather "substrata", which are not themselves essences but properties and so fall under essences and thereby form "states of affairs" *(Sachverhalten)* (§§11, 14, 15). Substrata are thus what many philosophers in Aristotle's wake called "substances". Substrata and their essences cannot exist independently of one another, nor can the essences Substratum and Form or Essence (§§2, 15). The lowest level of essence to which substratum belongs is its "eidetic singularity" (§15), which includes its finest differentiations from all other substrata (including its spatiotemporal location, if it is a material thing). The highest level of essence to which a substrate belongs is called its "region" (§10); for instance, a material thing falls under the region Nature (§10).

These distinctions are drawn in the science of "material ontology", but "formal ontology" distinguishes from these "material" regions and the essences

they subsume, the "formal regions" that are properly called "categories" (§10). Formal ontology is "the eidetic science of object in general" (p. 67). Objects (entities in the most general sense) fall under various "formal categories", including Thing, Property, Relation, State of Affairs (*Sachverhalt*), Group (p. 66). These are also called "logical categories" (p. 67) or "categorical essences" (p. 69), and particular states of affairs are built up "syntactically" from substrata and properties or relations in accord with the "syntactical category" State of Affairs (§11). Husserl explicitly distinguishes categories of "meanings" or "propositions" from categories of objects in the world (§10), though the syntactic structure of, say, the *proposition* that Russell was British parallels the "syntactic" structure of the *state of affairs* that Russell was British (indeed, the proposition is a meaning that represents just that state of affairs). This position is similar in spirit to the "logical atomism" developed in the same period by the early Russell and Wittgenstein.

## A Dual-Essence Theory of Ego and Experience

It is important to appreciate the richness and detail of Husserl's ontology, lest we read too casually his talk of the "essence" of consciousness. Indeed, only by appreciating his special notion of "region" -- a high-level essence -- can we interpret the fateful quotation we drew from §33 of *Ideas*.

As Husserl concludes that passage (so quoted above):

> [T]he sphere of pure consciousness, along with that which is inseparable from it (thereunder the "pure Ego *[Ich]*"), remains over as a "*phenomenological residuum*", as a region of Being (*Seinsregion*) which is in principle unique, and can become in fact the field of a new, in principle new, science of consciousness, i.e., the science of Phenomenology.

Thus, pure consciousness -- including pure experiences and the pure Ego or I-- belongs to a unique *region* of Being: a high-level essence which we are to study in the science of phenomenology, namely, the essence Consciousness.[6] But, as the opening of the quotation says, that same thing -- the I or the experience respectively -- falls under the *region* Nature (cf. §10):

> I, the real human being, am a real object like others in the natural world. I carry out... "acts of consciousness"..., and these acts... are events in the same natural world.

Thus, I am a conscious subject, falling under the essence Consciousness; and I am also a human being, or animal, falling under the essence Nature. Furthermore, my experiences are acts falling under the essence Consciousness, and they are also brain events falling under the essence Nature.

So Husserl offers a certain kind of dual-aspect theory of mind and body. There is one substratum (or substance), *I*, "*the* Ego *[Ich]*", which has two very different essences in being a conscious subject (having intentional experiences) and being an animal (having a nervous system, digestive tract, etc.); and so that one entity falls under the two distinct regions, Consciousness and Nature. Similarly, there is one substratum, "*the* experience", which has two very different essences in being, say, a visual experience of such-and-such and being a process in the visual cortex of the brain; and thus that one event falls under the two regions, Consciousness and Nature. In terms most modern, the pure I and the human I are *token-identical* but *type-distinct*, and likewise the pure experience and the brain event are token-identical but type-distinct.[7]

By insisting on the distinctness of the essence Consciousness and the essence Nature, Husserl precludes the ontological reduction of either Consciousness to Nature (= classical materialism, given an ontology of essences) or Nature to Consciousness (= classical idealism *cum* essences). Thus, he resists what Mohanty has called the "mundanization" of consciousness[8], its reduction (in *essence*) to events in nature, or the natural "world". Yet he maintains a monism of substrate -- Ego or experience -- falling under these two regions.

Husserl goes on to say (§§49-50 in the chapter titled "The Region of Pure Consciousness") that the *being (Sein)* of "pure world", the world of nature, is

essentially "relative" to consciousness, denying that this amounts to a "Berkeleyan idealism" (§55). This is supposed to be a feature of the *essences* Consciousness and Nature, or (Natural) World. Whether or not this claim is true, it is certainly a step beyond the claim that one entity, the Ego, falls under distinct essences, Consciousness and Nature. And one could certainly be a realist in the sense of denying this dependence, while yet endorsing the token-identity and type-distinctness of the pure I and the human being, or the pure experience and its neural counterpart.

## The I and the Body

Thanks to Descartes, the classical "mind-body" problem in the West assumes that the human body is an object in nature, to be studied by physics and biology: in Husserl's terms, the essence Human Body falls under the region Nature. However, Husserl's phenomenology, followed by Merleau-Ponty's, suggests a more complicated ontology.[9]

Husserl's distinction between the "lived body" *(Leib)* and the "physical body" *(Körper)*[10] -- at first a distinction in two ways of experiencing one's body -- seems to imply a distinction between two *essences* of body: the essence Lived Body and the essence Physical Body. Then the traditional mind-body problem concerns the relation between substrata falling under the essence Physical Body and the essence Ego or Experience -- or between these essences themselves. But, in Husserl's ontology, the "mind-body" problem would be more complicated. One entity, I, falls under the essence Physical Body, which falls under the region Nature; and that same entity, I, falls under the essence Lived Body. But how does the essence Lived Body relate to the essences Physical Body and Nature, and how does it relate to the essences ("Pure") Ego and Consciousness? If Merleau-Ponty was right, the body as lived is often the *subject* of experiences[11]; then, in Husserl's ontology, the essence Lived Body (or Living/Experiencing Body) would fall under the essence Ego and so under the region Consciousness. But then Body and Consciousness are not disconnected, as Husserl's account of epochē seems to assume (§32); only Physical Body and Nature are separated from Consciousness, nowhere found on the hierarchy or tree of essences (genera and species) falling under the region Consciousness.

## The I and the One

Am *I* a *substance* in the Aristotelian sense, a permanent unchanging entity that underlies change or transition from one group of attributes to another instantiated in that entity? Or am *I* instead a *process*, a temporal flow of experiences organized by memories of past experiences, similarities of thought and emotion, etc.? Descartes argued that I am a purely mental substance. To the contrary, Hume argued that one cannot observe any such substance in "oneself", but only flow of experiences. And two thousand years earlier, Buddha had developed a theory of "no-self" (*Anatta*).[12] According to the Buddha, what we call "I" is not a permanent, unchanging substance but only a changing flow of physical and mental energies, falling under the "five aggregates" of matter, sensations, perceptions, mental formations (including volitional activities), and consciousness (= pure awareness). It is interesting to compare this grouping of "mental" and "physical" processes with those charted by, say, Aristotle, Descartes, Husserl, and Merleau-Ponty. For clearly, with this grouping of essences -- species of processes within "me" or "I" -- the Cartesian mind-body problem is again quite changed: how do the "physical" essences relate to the "mental" within Buddha's five aggregates?

Recall Husserl's notion of "categories", or "formal" essences, or regions, including Individual, Property, Relation, State of Affairs. Could the same entity, I, fall under two different *categories*, say, the category Individual and the category Process? If so, then Descartes and Husserl viewed the self as a substratum falling under the category Individual, while the Buddha and Hume viewed the self as substratum falling under the category Process. Husserl's ontology might allow this possibility. For strictly speaking, Husserl's notion of substratum is merely that of an entity falling under a hierarchy or tree of essences; so a substratum is not defined, *à la* Aristotle, as something that underlies change, except in the case of a substratum that falls under the essence Changeable Individual.

Could it be, then, that the "I" which I experience falls under such different categories as Individual and Process? Further, could it be that the *process* I experience as "I" is -- in Husserl's terminology -- a "moment" or dependent part[13] of the grand process that *is* the universe, or perhaps Being, or -- in the terms of Plotinus and much later the American transcendentalists -- "the One"?

Emerson, the proto-American "Transcendentalist", said the "True Self" *is* the One, Nature, God, Being -- indeed, he counted the Buddhist as a Transcendentalist[14] In this a part of the West joins a part of the East. And, although the metaphysics of "the One" has not been in fashion recently in the West, there is an ontology that could write the metaphysics in a way that is intelligible to Western philosophy as we approach the new millenium. Such an ontology is sketched all too briefly above.

## NOTES

1. In Europe "transcendental" phenomenology has been modified by "existentialism" and attacked by the "historicist" movements of "hermeneutics", "critical theory of society", "deconstruction", and "post-structualism". (For that matter, the term 'post-structuralism' is Franco-centric, as "structuralism" was never in other countries the *avant garde* movement that it was in France). In England "transcendental" philosophy lives among Kant scholars and, to some extent, those like P.F. Strawson who have been influenced by Kant. In North America "transcendental" philosophy persists primarily among those influenced either by Kant or by Husserl -- perhaps Jaakko Hintikka, somewhat influenced by both and recently by Wittgenstein, could be seen as working in a partly "transcendental" way. In opposition stand the more dominant attitudes of empiricism and physicalism, in W.V.O. Quine and many in his wake. Yet there is a kind of "transcendental" stance in the pragmatism of Quine and the "anti-realism" of Michael Dummett, Hilary Putnam, and Bas van Fraassen. In the American "Continentalist" tradition, the "transcendental" work influenced by Husserl has been the object of critique by those influenced by Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida. The American "transcendentalists" of the Nineteenth Century have no obvious progeny today, though Stanley Cavell has made use of Emerson.

2. J.N.Mohanty, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, now Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 1985).

3. *Ideas* (translated by W. R. Boyce Gibson; George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1969; translation of *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, Erstes Buch, Marginus Nijhoff, Haag, 1950; German original, 1913). All reference to this text are cited in the body of my essay.

4. Hilary Putnam has expressed the same distinction in the same terminology, psychological states in the "wide" sense and in the "narrow" sense, i.e., "presupposing" and not presupposing the existence of anything other than the subject. Cf.Putnam, "The Meaning of 'Meaning'" in his *Mind, Language, and Reality: Philosophical Papers, Volume 2* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1975).

5. Cf. the later work *Cartesian Meditations* (translated by Dorion Cairns; Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1960; German original, 1931), §§30ff.

6. It is worth noting that in American English today 'science' means the "hard" sciences of physics, biology, etc., but in German in Husserl's day 'Wissenschaft' meant simply a discipline or field of study. Indeed, it was then common to distinguish the "natural" and "human" sciences, as *Naturwissenschaft* and *Geisteswissenschaft*. So Husserl's "new science" would not necessarily follow the methodology of the natural sciences.

7. Cf. Jerry Fodor, *The Language of Thought* (MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachussetts, 1975). Similarly, John Searle espouses in effect a property dualism, where the same psychological state has irreducibly different types of properties including intentionality on the one hand and neural activity on the other: cf. Searle, *Minds, Brains and Science* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984). And Donald Davidson has espoused "anomal monism", according to which mental events are brain events but the same events are described as "mental" or "physical" in different theories and there are no scientific laws that bridge the two theories: see "Mental Events" (1970), in Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1980).

8. Cf. Mohanty, *Husserl and Frege* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1982), p. 116. Mohanty sees psychologism, in particular, as a "mundanizing" of consciousness, treating it in terms of naturalistic psychology.

9. Mohanty has studied the ramified "mind-body" problem posed by Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body. See *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy, op. cit.*, Essay 9, "Intentionality and the Mind-Body Problem". Here I am pressing the ontology of the ramified mind-body problem, using Husserl's doctrine of essences.

10. The distinction is launched already in *Ideas I*, developed in *Ideas II*, and used extensively in connection with the "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*) in the *Crisis*. Cf. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (translated by David Carr; Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1970; German original, edited by Walter Biemel, posthumously published in 1954).

11. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception,* translated by Colin Smith, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962; French original published in 1945).

12. Cf. Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Grove Press, New York, 1959), pp. 20ff, 51ff.

13. Cf. *Logical Investigations* (translated by J.N. Findlay; Rouledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1970; German original, 1900-01), Third Investigation.

14. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Selected Essays* (edited by Larzer Ziff; Penguin Books, New York, 1982); cf. "Self-Reliance" (1841) for a discussion on the True Self, God, and Nature; cf. "The Over-Soul" (1841) for a discussion on God and Soul or Self; and cf. "The Transcendentalist" (1842) for a discussion on Kant and Buddhism.

# THE CONCEPT OF THE BODY

**Eliot Deutsch**

## PREFACE

I am very pleased to be able to contribute to this volume of essays honoring my friend and colleague in "comparative philosophy" J. N. Mohanty. Professor Mohanty is one of a very few philosophers in the world who is equally at home in the technical intricacies of traditional Indian philosophy and in the most current movements in Western thought. One must also add, quite emphatically, that not only is Professor Mohanty at home in these worlds as a scholar, but that he has as well contributed significantly in a creative way to their development.

The concept of the body has received considerable attention recently in both phenomenological and analytic philosophical circles. The concern to understand 'the body' in new ways seems to rest on a deep dissatisfaction with the mind/body dualism (and its consequent denigrating of the role of the body in experience) that has haunted much modern Western thought, at least since Descartes. The dualism, which oftentimes seems inescapable in our Indo-European languages, simply does not seem to conform with our actual experience of ourselves and our world and has resisted a clear determination of meaningfulness when subject to trenchant linguistic/analytic treatment (from Ryle to Strawson). The phenomenology in particular that has interested Professor Mohanty so deeply has tried to overcome this dualism at its very core by re-examining carefully how our body becomes a central feature in all experience.

Traditional Indian thought, on the other hand, while clearly articulating differences between mental and physical phenomena, did not on the whole assume that they were opposed to one another or occupied different ontological domains; in fact, many of the functions and capacities which we associate with mind or consciousness were taken to be physical in character: *manas* as a sense-organ. As in many other areas of philosophy to which Professor Mohanty has



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 93–109.

contributed, 'the body' lends itself nicely to an alliance between contemporary Western and traditional Indian thought.

Although, to my knowledge, Professor Mohanty has not written extensively on the concept of the body, I do know, from conversations with him, that he is very much interested in it. I rejoice in dedicating this essay to him.

...

At birth each individual human being is a unique configuration of various physical, psychical (and perhaps other yet to be determined) conditions.[1] These conditions, which are indefinite in number and clearly embody biological and cultural processes, are not, of course, simply heaped-up together like bits of dirt on a pile, rather they are given as constitutive of a unified being. An individual is a psychophysical being.[2]

At birth each individual nevertheless can be weighed and measured; he/she can be examined closely by an attending physician for physical "birth defects"; hair and skin color can be noted, and so on. Some of the given physical features (or what I prefer generally to call "conditions") are universal; others are particular (what an older terminology quaintly called "accidental"). I have a nervous system which define my organic being and that of others; and certain of my other features may also be similar to those of others of the same "national/racial" origin. I also have my own peculiar physical characteristics. No one is exactly like me *qua* physical being. As an individual I am an *identifiable* physical being with universal and general structures and particular features. I can be explained by a scientist and I can be depicted by an artist.

An individual, then, doesn't so much have a body as he/she is his/her physical (and other) conditions. 'The body', I want to argue, is an achievement concept. Persons have bodies to the degree to which they appropriate the physical conditions of their individuality and become integrated (and not merely unified) psychophysical beings.[3]

The primary meaning of 'the body', I thus believe, is the "appropriated body". What we may call the "object-body" -- the physical conditions of individuality taken in isolation and brought into a portrait--and the "subject-body" -- the sense one has of one's object-body primarily as a source of activity -- are secondary and derivative.

## The Body as an Achievement Concept

Several metaphors have dominated and controlled much of philosophical and popular thinking about the body. The body, it has been said, is a "prison house", a "temple", a "machine", an "instrument". The metaphors obviously contain and mix together descriptions, attitudes and theories.

The "prison-house" (Platonic) metaphor is essentially a complaint which relates the awareness of the possibility of, and difficulty in attaining, pure rational consciousness. The body is seen not only as the principle which differentiates and restricts the possibilities of one's being, but as the principle of containment; as that which hinders and becomes an obstacle to that (knowing) consciousness that wants to be everywhere and nowhere. The body, according to Plato, makes incessant demands, driving us toward evil pleasures and desires, causing "war and faction and fighting."

The great body-despisers of history, as Nietzsche would call them (the "ascetics -- and no doubt their orgiastic opposites), have all at one time subscribed to this metaphor, which so powerfully expresses the recognition of the physical as the seat of restlessness, of sexual desire, of distraction, especially through sickness and decay.

The prison metaphor, however, points to a divided self and can, in the last analysis, when believed in only yield a frustrated will. Experience clearly testifies to the fact that waking consciousness can be dissociated from the physical conditions of our being only at the cost of those conditions seeking their revenge, working through that division to demand and take their due.

The "temple" metaphor (1 *Corinthians*, 6.19), on the other hand, is essentially a prescription which tells us how we ought to regard our bodies. It finds its intelligibility within a "religious" framework of values that sees the possibility of a reverential attitude toward all things in virtue of their divine origin and grounding. The body can be a "holy vessel" enshrining a divine spirit. Not to be taken as a mere source of pleasure and pain, the body is to be counted among things potentially sacred.

The temple metaphor in its pure form has always had a rather limited acceptance. It obviously points to a noble ideal, but tends to overlook too strongly just those features of the prison-house metaphor that have given it its

enduring appeal. Within Christian thought itself the metaphor had to be Aristotelianized and made compatible with a doctrine of resurrection, in which the physical body as such becomes a spirit-body.

The "machine" metaphor, on the other hand, which has been pervasive in modern Western thinking is essentially an explanation which purportedly shows us what the body actually is and the place it occupies in the natural scheme of things. Grounded in seventeenth-century mechanistic science, the machine metaphor intends to bind the physical entirely to nature; the human body is but one kind of physical system among many others.

Although crude machine models have been largely abandoned in most thinking peoples' image of the body in favor of more organic and cybernetic ones, the basic intent of the metaphor still stands. Man *qua* physical being is utterly a part of nature. His mental being is an autonomous (thinking but unextended) order set over and against the physical, yet somehow interacting with it.

The machine metaphor does much to capture the sense we have of the centrality and priority of consciousness. Part of us might be reduced to lawlike forces, but with our minds we nevertheless transcend the physical as such. This transcendence, though, is understood as something simply given to us in virtue of our being human and not as it should be with all genuine transcendence, an achievement.

The "instrument" metaphor is closely related to the machine metaphor and is, in many ways, an extension of it. It is essentially a description of how human beings control and employ their (machine-like) bodies; and clearly presupposes that human beings have independent wills and the like which enable them to use their bodies as instruments. A "tool" requires a user.

There is an undeniable force to the instrument metaphor, as living things do indeed seem to have, in varying degrees, the wondrous capacity to initiate all sorts of body-movements and purposive actions. And this gives rise to the sense that somehow 'I' am able to be other than my body and can use it in much the same way when I employ a hammer, a saw, a screwdriver; although reflection should show that the 'I' who uses a body is already constituted bodily in a certain way.

Now these dominant, controlling metaphors, in addition to being dualistic in character,[4] are conceptually "static"; they presuppose that the *meaning* of 'the body' can be spelled-out in principle in purely descriptive terms, 'the body'

referring to an objective given of nature or of experience. This static character is quite typical of the "logic" of many of our most basic concepts. Let me explain.

Philosophers (still somewhat under the sway of positivism) often distinguish between evaluative and descriptive (or classificatory) uses of conceptual terms and insist that "meaning" as such belongs exclusively with the latter. Morris Weitz, for example, in his well-known article "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics", writes:

> ..."Art" is construed as an evaluative term which is either identified with its criterion or justified in terms of it. "Art" is defined in terms of its evaluative property, e.g., successful harmonization. On such a view, to say "X is a work of art" is (1) to say something which is taken *to mean* "X is a successful harmonization" (e.g., "Art *is* significant form") or (2) to say something praiseworthy *on the basis* of its successful harmonization. Theorists are never clear whether it is (1) or (2) which is being put forward. Most of them, concerned as they are with this evaluative use, formulate (2), i.e., that feature of art that *makes* it art in the praise-sense, and then go to state (1), i.e., the definition of "Art" in terms of its art-making feature. And this is *to confuse the conditions under which we say something evaluatively with the meaning of what we say.*[5]

There are, however, I firmly believe, a range of concepts which have their meaning only in evaluative or (better) achievement terms; which is to say, certain concepts have no clear or exhaustive descriptive content apart from their evaluative or achievement sense. I have argued elsewhere that "personhood" is just a concept. To be a person *means* to have achieved a certain kind of

integration and quality of being; it means, among other things, to have achieved a sensitivity and openness to the being of others. Persons, on this account, are not givens of nature. The meaning of 'personhood' is not reducible to a set of descriptive features available to a presumed everyday value-free sense-perception. There is no way that one could spell out the sufficient conditions for personhood and then impose evaluative properties on the otherwise presumably clear-cut descriptive meaning. These evaluative properties are simply built-in to those conditions.

Frank Sibley has argued that aesthetic terms function much in this same way. For their application they require a certain *perceptiveness* or taste, for "there are no non-aesthetic features which serve in *any* circumstances as logically *sufficient* conditions for applying aesthetic terms."[6] There may indeed be negative conditions that govern the application of aesthetic concepts -- if a painting were of very light blues and was highly geometric, one can be certain that it is not "fiery or garish or flamboyant." But, and this is the main point, no description of a painting as being of X color, Y shape, etc., can insure that it will be "serene" or "graceful".

The same, I think, holds true for the notion of "body". I have/am a body, in the primary sense of the term, to the degree to which I have appropriated and integrated the given physical conditions of my being (which conditions as such can indeed in principle be described). *My* body *is* only as it is articulated within my being as a person. The isolable physical conditions of my individual being, in other words, are not my body. What I recognize as integral to me *qua* person is not this configuration but what, in a way, I have made of it as my own. To appropriate the physical means to acknowledge the given conditions -- the physical structures, drives, powers, capacities -- and to bring them firmly into the fabric of my achieved identity. A body, then, always belongs to someone. The primary meaning of the concept is its achievement sense.[7]

Achievement terms, then, are not condition-governed. The aesthetic/moral/spiritual quality to which they apply is not reducible to a set of features which admit of simple sense-recognition. Nor does knowledge by description help: knowing that a person has paid great attention to the care of his or her "body" doesn't guarantee that he or she has appropriated rightly the physical capabilities of their individual being. He or she might, with all his attention and care, become entirely "one-sided", a "mindless muscle-man".

It is then a peculiarity of achievement terms that one cannot specify at what (quantitative) point they admit of application. Just when an individual becomes a person cannot be stated; at exactly what time/space the given physical conditions get rightly appropriated as a body cannot be indicated -- precisely because they are qualitative achievements. In short, when something is an achievement it has taken on a qualitative character that is different in kind from the raw materials that constitute it.

## The "Appropriated Body"

Sartre insists that we choose the "constitution" of our body as given to us. The cripple, Sartre says, chooses the way he constitutes his disability "(as 'unbearable', 'humiliating', 'to be hidden', 'to be revealed to all', 'an object of pride', 'the justification for my failures', etc.)."[8] But this analysis presupposes that 'the body' is the physical conditions of an individual, not what is appropriated by a person. It also assumes that "body constitution" is primarily volitional.

Self-consciousness of the body, however, starts from the standpoint of psychological unity. It is simply not the case that some separable 'I' adopts an attitude toward a *pre-given* body, for that 'I' is already what the person has created *qua* persona out of the raw materials of his being. A person *is* his achieved identity. We are not "chosen" by ourselves but are created in a more fundamental on-going way.

Body-appropriation (the bringing of the physical conditions of one's individual being into the matrix of one's personal identity and self-image) proceeds, quite obviously, through various stages. The child must struggle through to an initial assimilation of the physical in order to accept the raw material of his being as his own -- the physical, at this stage, often subject to rapid change and growth. The appropriation process from childhood to adulthood is largely unselfconscious: a personal 'I' continually develops (and sometimes disintegrates) autogenetically, as it were, and precariously. At every stage a person has a kind of unfinished completeness. A unified 'I' stands forth, a unique personality is announced -- subject to change, alteration, development.[9]

Appropriation is thus at once an acknowledging-integrating and a selecting process. It is an acknowledging-integrating of the conditions of individuality (as

being my limitations and opportunities) and it is a selecting from among the conditions those (in pattern, combination, configuration) which will be "educated" for disciplined action. The selection process is not, of course, entirely voluntary. In the development of maturation, one is trained to do certain things (and not others) in certain ways; things and ways which are part of the larger society's ways of doing things. Body-education is both personal and social. At various stages of my life I am able to decide to acquire certain body-skills and to devote the necessary time and energy to that acquisition. Body-appropriation thus sets the stage, as it were, for my potential actions. Personal identification is as much a matter of what I am *able to do* as it is *who* I am; or to put it another way, who I am involves very much what I am able to do and in what manner or way.[10]

The body as appropriated can never then in Gabriel Marcel's words, be "exterior to a certain central reality of myself."[11] As a person I am as I have created myself in and through the raw materials of my being.[12] Person-consciousness, then, does not say in any exclusive sense "I am my body" anymore than it says "I am not my body", for the body is here part and parcel of the very condition of identification. Pathological disunity and one-sided identification are always possible -- but they are recognized precisely as pathological.

The question which is often raised, then, of whether or not I am *contingently* related to *this* body is thoroughly misguided. It is simply inconceivable for one whose achieved appropriation of the physical is constitutive of his personhood to be other than himself. I cannot without contradiction think of *myself* as someone else: I can imagine what it might be like to have certain qualities which I don't have; but the 'I' who does the imagining is already constituted *qua* persona in a certain way.[13]

This does not mean, however, that a person *owns* his or her body in any literal sense of the term. The concept of "ownership" with respect to the body lacks a precise literal meaning, albeit it has rich metaphoric possibilities. "To own" something in the literal sense means to be separate from it and to have some special claim upon it. Ownership usually implies possessionship of some kind -- either directly or by having a "right of". I might own the house I live in and have the right of possession to the apartment I own elsewhere. As a social, legal concept having essentially to do with property, ownership has nothing literally to do with the relationship between a person and his body (*qua*

appropriated). A person can't exchange his appropriated-body for another without ceasing to be himself; he can't decide to occupy it or not.

But people do identify with what they own, and hence a vital metaphor of "ownness" does arise in the context of personhood. I own my body as a person most powerfully in the sense of affirmation and identification. Psychologically the metaphor carries the sense of being the opposite of disowning. To disown something of what I obviously am involves some kind of self-deception. "Ownness" here means a lucid self-togetherness: it means a "belonging with". I own my body insofar as it belongs to me and for which, without my possessing it as a commodity, I assume a special responsibility.

The primary consciousness of ourselves *qua* body is, then, we are suggesting, from the standpoint of a unified state of the psychophysical. We don't start with a disembodied 'I' who suddenly discovers that he has a body of certain kind. That 'I' is what it is in terms of somatic as well as mental appropriation.

In speaking, as we have done, of the appropriated-body as a personal achievement, one might get the impression, which would be erroneous, that the appropriated-body as we understand it is a *private* something or other to which "I" alone have privileged access. The appropriated-body, I believe, is basically an interpersonal phenomena, for the simple reason that the very concept of a person -- to which the appropriated body contributes in such a significant way-- is throughout *social* in character. I am a person only in relation to others. I am a person only as a "cultured" being. The persona that I present myself as being is seen by others precisely in terms of the achieved unity of my mental and physical powers, such as they might be. The appropriated-body, in short, is perceived by others as a matter of course in their perception of "me" and is what it is in virtue of the complex process of relationships that constitute my historical experience as a human being. Each of us may be profoundly alone -- but there is no solitary person.

The primary meaning of 'the body', then, is that the physical conditions of individuality become part and parcel of an integrated (social-grounded) person. In Marcel's words, this body is not so much an object but "the condition for objectification". The body may though become an object for consciousness, and then we may properly speak of an "object-body". The object-body is always experienced by a 'me' as a "subject-body".

## The "Object-Body" and The "Subject-Body"

A child first sees himself *qua* body as others see him; as "tall", "fat", "good-looking", "skinny". This "object-body" is perforce objective and public. It is what we see of the physical from the perspective of an appropriated-body consciousness when we isolate the physical and treat it precisely as an object. The object-body, in short, is the developed physical conditions of one's being as brought into a *portrait*.

A portrait, I have argued elsewhere,[14] is a perspective to which a person is responsive. It refers to an object without being a copy of it. It is a representation which rightly shows an object without exhausting it. Persons may be viewed in physicalist perspectives (through a variety of scientific descriptions, models, theories and explanations and in more everyday bodily terms) to which they are responsive; empirically, we would have to say, they lend themselves to just such perspectives. The portraits successfully represent the body as an objective and public phenomena.

If one had a complete knowledge of the physical, the object-body and the developed physical conditions would be exactly the same. We would have, then, not a portrait but "the truth". Lacking that complete knowledge, as we all do and no doubt forever will, the object-body will always be presented by an incomplete representation.

It is the object-body as such, then, which is subject to generation and degeneration and is therefore thoroughly temporal.

The object-body is the materiality of the individual as objectified.

Being the temporal-laden, objectified content of a portrait does not, however, make the object-body any less "real" than the appropriated-body. The object-body is secondary only in the order of meaning and in the givenness of experience. Its content is given to us necessarily from the standpoint of person-consciousness, which is to say we are able to discriminate an object-body (our own and that of others) only through an appropriated body/mind consciousness: an object-body content is accessible to us only as formed (by portrayal).

Sartre has argued that "the body is the point of view on which there cannot be a point of view."[15] If this were so, then there would be no way by which a person could constitute his facticity -- or, in our terms, form a portrait of himself and others *qua* body, which we obviously do. It is however certainly the

case that we don't actually perceive other persons as "bodies having minds" or simply as "bodies" which may or may not be mind-informed (as a strict empiricist might want to have it); we perceive other persons as the persona they present themselves as being.

Sartre has shown brilliantly (and vividly, with examples such as that of the voyeur) the manner in which we are beings-for-others (*être-pour-autrui*), the manner in which, that is to say, we objectify others and press that objectification on to their own self-consciousness. The man looking through the keyhole alone in a deserted hallway is to himself merely perceiving a certain scene; it is when someone appears in the hallway that he becomes and recognizes himself to be the "voyeur". "Hell is other people", Sartre announces in his play *No Exit* (*Hui Clos*); the other always makes of me what I am but not what I am to myself.

All of this is perhaps only a dramatic way of saying that the object-body is a richer social phenomenon than what is simply given by a portrait of the physical conditions of one's being. In our everyday experience, the object-body of another is always perceived *meaningfully*. Except as medical scientists, when we perceive another human being in bodily terms, we don't just perceive bare anatomical structures, and what we understand about their functioning we perceive the other bodily in complex qualitative ways (aesthetically, ethically, and so on). In the last analysis, as already indicated, we do perceive the other in fact as an "appropriated body". We do move, it seems to me, quite readily from simple behavioral perception of the other's object-body to an apprehension of the other as he is to himself. This brings us to the "subject-body".

Max Scheler, and others in the phenomenological tradition, distinguish a "lived body" (*der Leib*) from a "thing body" (*der Körper*). Scheler calls the "lived body" the immediate "hereness" of body; it is "that of which we have an inner consciousness."[16] The lived body, then, is simply "a totally uniform phenomenal fact" which "is independent and, in the order of givenness, prior to any special so-called 'organic sensations' and special kinds of outer perception."[17] The lived body's relationship to these organic sensations is "one between *form* and its *content*. In the same sense as all psychic experiences are only together in an 'ego' and conjoined into a unity of a special kind, all organic sensations are necessarily given as 'together' in a lived body."[18] The "thing body" is the "outer perception" of this primordial lived body.

The lived body, as Scheler characterizes it, however, remains then as something of a convenient fiction; it is not directly known in experience. "In the same sense as 'ego' must accompany all our (psychic) experience (as Kant pointedly said), so also", according to Scheler, "our lived body must accompany all organic sensations."[19] The unity of self for Kant, though, is not itself a content of experience. The relation of "lived body", as well as their respective natures, remains then a mystery. Scheler lacks that third central term, what we have called the "appropriated-body", which provides the ground for the distinction that may be drawn between the "subject-body" and the "object-body".

The "subject-body" as phenomenon is the immediate sense one has of one's object-body primarily as it is a seat of potential activity. The subject-body is what I experience myself to be physically (not simply in terms of an immediate sensation, which seems to ground many later phenomenological analyses, but as an ongoing source of activity).[20] One is normally aware of oneself physically not in terms of all that one might know about one's body *qua* object (which is usually very little), but in those terms that are required for successful action. As a subject, I am aware of certain primitive possibilities of body-action, of the repertoire of actions that I have acquired and learned: first of all, those which come quite naturally within my physical capacities and which I perform in "instinctive" ways (e.g., basic bodily functions like digesting); then, those which require a learned effort and consequently get performed in habitual ways (like riding a bicycle). The subject-body, we might then say, is for us a locus of body-habits, of body-*samskāras* or "dispositions" to act in certain ways.[21]

The appropriated-body, which contributes so importantly to our personal identification, involves, as we have seen, both an acknowledging-integrating and a selecting process and accordingly sets the parameters to one's ability to act. The subject-body, then, is our experience of ourselves as physical in just those circumscribed terms.

Gabriel Marcel writes:

> ...my body is only properly mine to the degree to which I am able to control it. But here, too, there is a limit, an inner limit; if as a consequence of some serious illness, I lose all control of my body, it tends to cease

> to be my body, for the very profound reason that, as we say in the common idiom, I am 'no longer myself.'[22]

The inability to control one's body, as with one who is incontinent means that one is no longer integrated as an agent in an environment; one becomes an object-body alone. As Merleau-Ponty notes:

> The body is the vehicle of being in the world, and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definite environment, to identify oneself with certain projects and to be continually committed to them.[23]

The subject-body, in short, we are suggesting, is essentially our awareness of ourselves as an active and as a potentially active being in an environment. I experience myself physically primarily in terms of the actions I do and can perform. The body as activating *telos* is the way we live our bodies as persons.[24]

If the essence of our consciousness of ourselves as a subject-body is as it is a seat of potential activity and not as a congery of inner sensations or a mere passive "being-here", then it follows that our subject-body, like our appropriated and object bodies, is an intersubjective or social phenomenon; for the repertoire of actions that is the content of that consciousness is itself largely social in character. Much of what I am able to do -- and especially in the manner in which I do what I am able to do -- is learned behaviour. I am *educated* to do a rich variety of actions. The vast majority, in fact, of my everyday actions, from eating to talking and driving, reflect my learning how to do these things in socially determined ways. All activity *qua* purposive actions presupposes a social context of interaction with, and reaction to, others in an environment.

We are not three different bodies: there is only a unified person. We speak of a person's having or being an "appropriated-body" as this is part and parcel of his constitution as a unified being. The given physical conditions of individuality are taken up, to the degree to which they are, as integral to person-

consciousness and identity. From that standpoint, the natural standpoint of a mature consciousness, one is then able, in a derivative way, to see and conceptualize the physical as an "object-body", as that which, albeit social in character, is strictly objectifiable. We form portraits of the physical, amenable perspectives, conceptual and symbolic notions and models which, when successful, do the descriptive and explanatory jobs intended by them. It is then only through an act of abstraction that we speak of an object-body; but this abstraction is not empty (we do have medical science) nor is it artificial (we are able to view others and ourselves quite readily in physical terms). At the same time we do have that primitive sense of ourselves as a physical presence capable of action; we are a "subject-body", the consciousness of our object-body as it is for us.

## NOTES

1. I see no reason why we should assume that what we regard now as "physical" and as "mental" necessarily exhausts what we may know about the raw material of our individual being. Radical new ways of regarding human beings are certainly a logical possibility and, if the history of science is any indication, an empirical likelihood. See my *Personhood, Creativity and Freedom* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1982), pp. 7-8.

2. The physical conditions of our individual being, in their bare normal functioning, are apparently entirely commensurate with, and allied with, various mental functions. Most of our bodily actions are at once physical and purposive. It is the psychotic who is the walking dualism; his body-movements seemingly unrelated to any purposive activity. The restiveness of the physical -- without restraint!

3. See my *Personhood, Creativity and Freedom*, pp. 1-16 for an explication of the distinction between "person" and "individual".

4. The machine metaphor is explicitly so, for it forthrightly excludes the mental from that extended (Cartesian) realm of materiality of which the body is inextricably a part. The prison-house and temple metaphors likewise see the human body in some kind of radical dissociation from the spirit, at least initially, and seek to come to terms with that dissociation in their own ways. The instrument metaphor splits the willful person and his acting body -- and like the other metaphors must find a way to establish some kind of intimate relation between them. It should also be pointed out that the different metaphors are no doubt understood and accepted by different persons relative to their own personal experience. The slave who is constrained to be identified primarily as an object-body would probably recognize the "instrument" metaphor as closest to his/her experience; the holy ascetic either the "prison-house" or "temple" metaphor, and so on.

5. Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Esthetics," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 15 (1956), (last italics mine).

6. Frank Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts," *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXVIII (October 1959), p. 354.

7. By the *primary* meaning or sense of a concept I mean that which has priority in an axio-noetic way (and not that which is most widely used in ordinary language; although the two may, of course, coincide). The meaning of "the body" in the primary sense is what our physical nature is for us most intimately in our value experience and which is thereby presupposed in other uses/senses of the term -- and this, it seems clear to me, is what I will call the "appropriated body". It is "primitive" not because it is undefined, but because it is only from its standpoint, as I will try to show, that other somatic distinctions can be drawn.

8. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966), p. 432.

9. Traditional societies more so than "modern" ones seemed to give full recognition to the stages in bodily-appropriation that a young person typically undergoes. Various and oftentimes elaborate "rites of passage" are articulated (at puberty; the onset of "manhood", etc.) which map-out both natural changes and how those changes are to be dealt with within the social fabric. The rites guide the young person, making clear what is expected of him or her *qua* bodily appropriation.

10. A disparity may of course exist between the manner of one's body appropriation (one's personal identification) and the actualities of one's given physical conditions. A person might indeed believe himself to be (in bodily terms) other than he in fact is; Jane might think of herself as physically being beautiful but command little agreement from others on that score (albeit her believing so would no doubt affect positively the total self-image she presented to others). In any event, a kind of self-deception in somatic terms is always possible, and is no doubt rather prevalent.

It is also the case that when circumstances disallow, or make it extremely difficult to achieve, the having of an appropriated-body in a full, integrative way, there will oftentimes be a corresponding diminution or deprivation of personhood. By rejecting significant parts of the conditions of its being, the 'I' will necessarily be divided within itself. And just as the level of person presentation, where multiple appearants of a unified self are brought forth in a variety of functional roles, so at the somatic level multiple body-appearants may be said to derive from the integrated appropriated body; one might exhibit an athlete-body, a lover-body, a labor-body and concentrate one's bodily being, as it were, into one or more of these functional syntheses.

Also, the manner in which individual body-appropriation takes place will indeed vary enormously in different historical and cultural contexts. Women no doubt appropriate their bodies in ways (with content and style) different from men in any age; so do different individuals within each gender as well, depending upon everything from social-class distinction (especially for those who have had to "use their bodies" as labor bodies in primary ways) to health-care opportunities. For some persons the physical conditions of their being become a happy source for personal identity; for others they become an oppressive burden. When one is identified by various physical features (say skin color) in contexts which are derogatory (racist), the achievement of a secure personal identity

is an extremely difficult task: there is always considerable psychological resistance to appropriating what others take to be "negative".

11. Gabriel Marcel, *Metaphysical Journal*, trans, Bernard Wall (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1952), entry November 9, 1920.

12. "Who or what then carries out the appropriating process?" -- it might well be asked. And the answer must be that no one or no thing as such can be specified as the agent-behind-the-process; rather the means/conditions of appropriation emerge in the process itself and are constantly modified thereby. We are so accustomed to think in terms of independent agency that it seems almost self-contradictory to conceive of a process, creative or otherwise, as setting the conditions for its own direction and fulfillment; but that however, it seems clearly to me, is its nature. The person who appropriates his/her experience and the terms of his/her individuality is the same person who creatively comes forth. As Merleau-Ponty noted in a different context: "In so far as the content can be readily subsumed under the form and can appear as the content *of* that form, it is because the form is accessible only through the content." (*Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith [New York: Humanities Press, Inc., 1962], p. 102). The wearer creates the mask; the mask becomes the wearer. Person-making, albeit socially grounded, is throughout autogenetic in character.

13. Our object-body, as we will call it, does of course have a sort of ontological contingency, for the physical conditions of individuality as such do not, as given, bear any necessary reason for their being; albeit they are given within a causal nexus which many would regard as bearing some sort of empirical necessity.

14. See *Personhood, Creativity and Freedom.*, pp. 6-9 for a discussion of the nature of a portrait.

15. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 403ff.

16. Max Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, trans. Manford S. Frings, in *The Philosophy of the Body: Rejections of Cartesian Dualism* edited by Stuart F. Spicker (New York: Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1970), p. 161.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 163.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Gabriel Marcel, for example, writes: "...my body, in so far as it is properly mine, presents itself to me in the first instance as something felt.... *"The Mystery of Being: I Reflections and Mystery"*, trans. G.S. Fraser (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, Gateway Edition, 1960), p. 125.

Now the subject-body as phenomenon does of course involve our "inner bodily sensations" (our felt-awareness of various happenings carried out with and upon the body, from love-making to being hit by a car); but these sensations, by their very nature, tend to be

intermittent and short-lived. Sensation-wise we experience ourselves physically for the most part only when we meet resistances to our performing various actions – "resistances" (such as the pressure required to move a pen) which are not to be identified with "obstacles". The essential, rather more enduring sense we have of ourselves physically, is the body as a locus of potential activity. This "sense" is not an abstraction, but is rather the experiential realization of our *power* to act. This awareness of aliveness, of vitality (such as it is), tells us that we *can* act: the subject-body, in short, is our awareness of our power of doing within the conditions of our object-body.

Physical pain, for example, drives a wedge in consciousness, forcing a one-sided acknowledgement of brute physicality, alienating one from one's subject-body, turning everything over to an object-body. In pain, I can't do what I am otherwise capable of doing in the manner which is my way of doing it, for acute pain is consuming. The pain becomes me; but I refuse to be the pain and hence, apart from the sheer physical discomfort, its unendurability. The psychophysical grounded 'I' wants always to be itself– or to obliterate itself only on its own terms.

21. And thus there appears to be a notable somatic dimension to all subwaking consciousness; which is to say, one is not normally aware of the way and extent to which one's body has assimilated and retained various action-forms (skills like riding a bicycle, typing, and so on) but whose forms nevertheless influence strongly the purposive actions that are performed at the level of waking consciousness. The body as educated has its capacities and its habits. It becomes its actions insofar as it is always influenced by what it does and in what manner of doing.

22. Gabriel Marcel, *Mystery of Being*, p. 119.

23. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 151. This is borne out by the fact that one of the most terror-laden experiences one can have is the sudden, unexpected inability to control one's being physically. This inability threatens the very existence of the 'I'. A "straight-jacket" might help restrain a madman; but if suddenly imposed upon an ordinary person it might well render him or her quite deranged.

24. It is therefore somewhat artificial in any circumstances to divorce conceptually the body from an environment. A body must always be some place, and indeed has its very being only in relation to natural conditions and to other bodily-beings.

# HUSSERL'S THEORIES OF INDEXICALS

**Karl Schuhmann**

## The Problem

In the second volume of his *Logical Investigations*, published in 1901, Husserl distinguishes between two sorts of expressions: *objective* expressions, which can be fully understood by simply attending to the meaning of the terms they contain, and *subjective* expressions, where one needs in addition to be aware of the actual speaker and his factual situation in order to see what his words are about. Thus, in order to understand an expression like "2+3=5", it suffices to be familiar with the meanings of the terms involved. But no one can fully grasp what is meant by "I will give you this book next week" if he has to rely exclusively on his conceptual knowledge to the effect that "I" means that the person speaking, "you" the person addressed, "this" a thing in the immediate surroundings of the speaker, and so on. The meanings of the sentence uttered will vary considerably, according to whether it is Virgil who is using it (or a Latin equivalent) in his last talk with Augustus in 19 B.C. with the *Aeneid* in mind, or someone in our own day who is pointing to a copy of Mohanty's *Husserl and Frege*. The same phrase, when used in different situations, will be about different things; in this sense, it will have a different meaning.

Objective meanings, Husserl explains, are fixed ideal units that are made present by acts referring to them. A given psychic act of judging I am performing right now receives its meaning, e.g., from the atemporal, non-psychic content "2+3=5" which my present judging instantiates -- and from nothing but that. What, now, must be added in the case of subjective expressions to give them a full and concrete meaning? To Husserl, one thing is clear: as the very term "subjective meanings" indicates, the "subject", the person uttering the expression, must in some way be taken into account. But exactly in what way? As far as I can tell, Husserl tried in three different ways to elucidate this problem



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 111–127.

which, as he confessed, had driven him into a "difficult situation" (*Hua* XIX/2, 558).[1] In expounding these views I shall for various reasons concentrate mainly on what has been called "Husserl's brief but penetrating account" of subjective expressions in the *Logical Investigations*,[2] and on a discussion of some recently published material closely connected with his work.

## Husserl's First Theory: Perception Contains Meaning

Subjective expressions, Husserl says in the *Logical Investigations*, are "essentially occasional". They comprise a good deal of what, since Peirce's days, has been called indexicals (or, in Russell's terminology, egocentric particulars).[3] The very term "occasional" hints at the fact that according to Husserl these expressions deploy their full meaning only in view of the *occasion* on which they are used. As to precisely what makes such expressions have the meanings they have in a given situation, Husserl originally had developed what he had already in 1901 (in the additions to the second volume of the *Logical Investigations*) begun to call his "older conception" (*Hua* XIX/1, 89). According to his own words, this conception shines through mainly in the treatment of occasional expressions given in Investigation I, § 26, and it is to this paragraph we now have to turn.

Husserl nowhere gives an exhaustive list of what he considers to be "occasional" expressions. In the *Logical Investigations*, at any rate, he identifies personal pronouns and demonstratives (*Hua* XIX/1, 87 and 89), moreover expressions "referring to the subject" such as "here, there, above, below, now, yesterday, tomorrow, afterwards"(*Hua* XIX/1,90), and finally all sentences expressing, e.g., a person's perceptions, convictions, doubts, wishes, hopes, commands, entreaties, felicitations, etc. (cf. *Hua* XIX/1, 91 and *Hua* XIX/2, 746) -- in short, utterances that are in a strict sense non-judgmental.[4]

All such expressions involve a certain relation of what is expressed to the person who uses them.[5] In this relation lies the *general* function of the occasional expression. It is, e.g., the function of the word "I" that the speaker thereby designates himself; of "this", that something pertaining to the realm he is occupied with is meant; of "here", that the spatial surroundings of the speaker are denoted.

Seen under this general aspect the indexical component of expressions of the given sort seems to be of a conceptual nature. It remains the same in all cases of use and is instantiated in the same way that all other meanings are instantiated in psychic acts when used. Whenever we somewhere read an assertion beginning with the word "I", we know that the person who has written it was asserting something about himself. The concrete meaning of the indexical is however by no means exhausted by this general conceptual component. For it does not tell us, e.g., whether the sentence in question was written by Kant or by Husserl. Thus the general structure of the indexical serves only as an instrument or clue that is to help us discover who or what is meant in a given case. Husserl calls this general aspect the indexical's *indicating* meaning. Its task consists in directing our glance towards what in the concrete case and as a matter of fact is indicated. This latter is the *indicated* meaning peculiar to the indexical in the concrete circumstances of its use. Now this indicated meaning can be supplied only by intuitive acts (such as perceptions) presenting the very object intended by the speaker -- and Husserl in fact concludes that the individual meaning of a given indexical must reside in this intuitive presentation of the singular object to which this indexical refers.

The functioning of indexicals, that is to say, involves two different component parts: the general function of pointing toward something and a specific intuition of some individual thing. Here the second element is always built upon the basis of the first.[6] More concretely, the individual meaning, which the indexical indicates, is subsumed and subordinated under the general and indicating one, and it is by means of this subsumption of what is perceived under the indexical's general form that the full and concrete meaning is brought about.

What was it that had induced Husserl to develop such a two-layered view? The first Logical Investigation, which is where this doctrine is to be found, deals, according to its very title, with the relation between "expression and meaning". To this problem Husserl offers a general solution by declaring that meanings are to be considered as "species" in an Aristotelian sense of this term; and that they become individualized in concrete acts of expression. A meaning stands to an expression in the same way a species stands to an individual. It remains identical in all actualizations, and it is this self-sameness which accounts for our awareness that we can express the "same thing" (idea, thought, judgement etc.) each time we wish to do so. Correspondingly, this self-sameness accounts for the fact that

a hearer can grasp the very (same) thing a speaker means when he uses a certain expression. Both hearer and speaker enjoy acts which instantiate the self-same species.

Of course, such a theory could work only if the meanings embodied in expressions can be shown to remain strictly and rigorously the same through all varieties of use. And to this end such seemingly deviant expressions as the occasional ones had to be given special consideration. They had, that is, to be interpreted in a way that would allow them to be incorporated into Husserl's general scheme. This was achieved by means of the doctrine of the identical function of the indexical whereby the differences in concrete content were ascribed to intuitive presentation (in most cases, to perceptions), i.e., to a sphere outside the conceptual realm to which meanings otherwise pertain. Here again, it seems, an Aristotelian scheme was exploited by Husserl: the indexical's general function is in fact an analogue of the Aristotelian form, i.e., of something which becomes concrete by *informing* some given individualizing matter. Husserl held that by means of this procedure he could prove "the limitlessness of objective reason" (*Hua* XIX/1, 95), i.e., the reducibility of all seemingly aberrant expressions to "objective" ones, i.e., to expressions that would enjoy species-like ideal and identical meanings.

### Husserl's Second Theory: Perception Determines Meaning

As Husserl remarked in 1901 in the "Additions" appended to vol. II of the *Logical Investigations*, however, he had "in the process of my investigations" been forced to give up his first conception (*Hua* XIX/1, 89). The matter in question allows, as he was to state elsewhere in the book, "for another interpretation" (*Hua* XIX/2, 553). This second view is argued for mainly in § 5 of the Sixth Investigation, a paragraph we are to consider now.

In later years Husserl described his earlier "failure" adequately to understand indexical expressions as an "inevitable consequence of the imperfect conception of the essence of 'truth in itself' in the *Prolegomena*" to the *Logical Investigations (Hua* XVIII, 13).[7] To be sure, this concept as such plays in the *Prolegomena* only a minor role.[8] But in some measure at least it is clear what Husserl has in mind. As he was to explain a few years after the publication of the *Logical*

*Investigations*, a truth in itself is to be called a truth "in that very common sense in which we do not call an act of judgment, but rather a proposition, a truth" (*Hua* XXII, 158). According to Husserl's own estimation, he had understood true propositions in the *Prolegomena* very much after the model of Leibnizian *vérités de raison (Hua* XVIII, 12). This implied that only objective meanings could be considered to be meanings in the strict sense of the term, since it is they alone that invariably remain the same notwithstanding the shifts to which acts of judgment may be subjected. As a consequence, Husserl had to relegate whatever is subjective to a realm outside that of strict meaning. Indexicals receive their meanings from a domain beyond the sphere of pure meanings. How intuitive presentations could unite with general conceptual functions to form a single whole is something that Husserl had not succeeded (and not even endeavoured) to explain. It was the task of Husserl's second theory to re-open this problem and to look for a more satisfactory answer.

Husserl's second theory, not unlike his earlier one, is embedded in a general theory of the relation between an expression and its meaning. While upholding his view of meanings as species of meaning-expressing acts, Husserl proceeds in the Sixth Investigation to a refinement of this theory by exploiting the distinction (already present in the First Investigation) between empty intention and fulfillment. It is an obvious fact that without the slightest restriction we can freely give expression to all the acts which we perform, be they acts of judging, wishing, asking, imagining, remembering, perceiving or the like. In no case, however, does the act in question pertain as such to the meaning of the corresponding expression. This is true no matter whether we express these acts themselves directly ("I see a big tree over there") or, on the basis of these acts, express what they are about ("There is a big tree over there"). As regards the first case, I can perfectly understand the meaning of your utterance without either myself performing an act of seeing or perceiving you to perform one. Thus the meaning of the utterance "I see a big tree over there" is *not* inextricably bound up with your internal seeing act.

It is with regard to the second class of utterances (of the type "There is a big tree over there", to which belong all judgments based on perception), that Husserl comes to take indexicals into consideration. Where his first theory had charged perception with the burden of containing in itself the concrete meaning of indexicals, Husserl now states that there is no such direct and intimate link

between perception and the indexical. Rather, within certain limits, the two are independent of each other, as is shown by the fact that they may vary independently. One and the same perception can serve as the basis of very different expressions having a different meaning. My perception may warrant not only the judgment "There is a big tree over there", but also, e.g., expressions such as "The leaves on this tree are already turning red" or "The oak to my left seems to be quite old". To be sure, in all these cases I am highlighting certain well-distinguished features of what I perceive; but I do so on the basis of a perception which as such remains unchanged. On the other hand, the content of my perception may undergo considerable changes (e.g., when I am approaching the tree), even though I go on entertaining the same statement which is based on it. Moreover, a second person located at a different place and thus having different contents of perception will be in a position fully to understand and even to verify my utterance, notwithstanding the differences in our respective perceptual acts. The other person may even come to understand my utterance by means of pure imagination, i.e., without himself performing any act of perception at all (*Hua* XIX/2, 553).

Thus, notwithstanding an undeniable intimate link between a perception and an expression referring to it, one cannot maintain that it is perception that as such contains the concrete meaning of the expression in question. There must be something in between. The actual perception can furnish nothing more than the conditions of possibility for a certain act of *intending* the concrete situation; and it is this very act, linking perception to an utterance, which must be the bearer of the meaning of the indexical expression. Perception alone is, certainly, responsible for *fulfilling* the specific meaning of an indexical; but as concerns the act intending this perception, it can be no more than a necessary base for building up the meaning of sentences referring to it. There is only one unitary act of intending that underlies the concrete, i.e., normally functioning indexical expression, although this act draws both from the indexical's general features and from intuition (in most cases, that is, from perception). The indexical's concrete meaning lies in this act of pointing, by way of the intending act, toward some concrete situation, and not in that situation itself. Therefore it does not matter in which specific way this situation is given -- be it in acts of perceiving, imagining or remembering -- in order to understand or grasp the full and complete meaning of the indexical used in a given expression. The difference

between these types of acts accounts for the degree to which meanings can be fulfilled; not, however, for their very constitution.

From this thesis Husserl draws several conclusions. First, the distinction advocated in his earlier theory between an indexical's "indicating" meaning and the meaning "indicated" is no more than a difference between two aspects of the unified and unitary act of intending.[9] Second, indexicals are closely related to proper names since they, too, name their object in a direct way. And they do so without their meaning coinciding with the object itself. Finally, meaning-intending acts must be accepted as mediating between *all* kinds of intuitive acts (be they acts of perception, imagination, remembrance, expectation, etc.) and their expressions.

Husserl's second theory, by introducing such acts of intending, is somewhat less parsimonious than had been his earlier one. Yet it has one important advantage over the earlier theory. The concrete meanings of indexicals now no longer come in as supernumerary entities in such a way as to complicate the general picture. Rather, they are integrated into the general theory of meaning as constituting a special class of meanings alongside meanings of other sorts, such as the meanings of proper and of general names. Meanings may derive their full content either from the conceptual sphere alone, or they may in part draw on a given situation via an intending act. Yet no matter what a meaning's origin, they are all of one single sort insofar as the acts in which something is intended are of one and the same kind. Correspondingly Husserl no longer sees any reason for recurring, with regard to meanings themselves, to his earlier distinction between subjective and objective expressions.

## Husserl's Third Theory: Everything Empirical is Indexical

In his 1913 Preface to the 2nd edition of *Logical Investigations*, Husserl remarked with regard to the First Investigation that its manner of dealing with indexicals had been more like cutting the Gordian knot than like solving the problem scientifically. Though we have no similar word as concerns the theory as expounded in the Sixth Investigation, we may presume that this criticism was meant to apply to it as well. For what pertains to indexicals, as Husserl in this Preface adds in passing (and between brackets), pertains, "strictly speaking, to

the meanings of all empirical predications" (*Hua* XVIII, 13), and this doctrine is clearly absent from the latter Investigation as well. These words thus point to a new conception which Husserl must have arrived at between 1901 (publication date of the second volume of *Logical Investigations*) and 1913 (date of the second edition of this work).

Up to this moment, no full exposé of Husserl's third theory has been published. Neither the motives that led to it nor the precise content of this theory are known today. Therefore I have to limit myself here to some preliminary remarks, and moreover must introduce my theme by way of some rather detailed historical considerations.

Between 1901 and 1913, Husserl, as far as can now be ascertained, worked on the problem of indexicals at three different times (though not necessarily at three different stages). In August 1908, he wrote some manuscripts on "deictic judgments" and on "the this-there and its truth".[10] These texts seem however to be irrelevant in the present context, since they apparently deal with judgments about immanent individual acts of consciousness. A manuscript of July 1909 on "the meaning of proper names" seems at first sight to be of more importance, since it contains -- as Husserl notes on its cover -- "a revision of my old doctrine of meaning" in the *Logical Investigations*.[11] Yet notwithstanding the close relation mentioned above between indexicals and proper names, it is doubtful whether this text would yield important evidence for a change in Husserl's views. Rather, it seems, we have to turn to early 1911, at which date Husserl -- in the course of his attempts to prepare a thoroughly reworked new edition of the *Logical Investigations* -- revised not only the doctrine, but also the very text of his earlier work.

It seems that Husserl's third theory did not grow out of general considerations, but rather results from this attempt to revise the text of 1900/01. And for obvious reasons it was not so much Investigations VI which caught his attention in this respect but rather the earlier Investigation I. Perhaps Husserl had first intended simply to revise those portions of § 26 of this Investigation that deal with the meaning of the terms "I" and "this".[12] He soon saw however that there was more to be done here and Husserl seems to have worked out (or, at least, to have compiled from older manuscripts) a whole convolute of texts around this theme. Thus he appended a marginal note to his personal copy of the *Logical Investigations* which reads: "Concerning § 26 see convolute ($\mu$)."[13] There are

actually three texts known in which Husserl reformulates his earlier doctrine: a marginal note on the last part of § 26 in Husserl's personal copy of the *Logical Investigations* (published in *Hua* XIX/2, 817), and two manuscripts related to § 28 of Investigation I. Of these one has been published in 1987 (*Hua* XXVI, 202-219),[14] and the second on individual judgments and their occasional meanings, is available in the Husserl-Archives under signature A VI 12 III/122-123. Maybe it is not so great a loss that the latter has not been published: Husserl himself noted on its cover that it should be reworked, since it is "in part not correct."[15]

All these texts revolve around the question of the nature of empirical predications. As was quoted above, the very field of indexicality, according to Husserl's 1913 Preface, has to be extended to embrace all such predications. In close analogy with this Preface, the aforementioned note in Husserl's copy states that "strictly speaking, occasional moments are contained in all statements of the 'concrete' sciences" (*Hua* XIX/2, 817).

What is implied in affirmation of this sort? In Investigation VI, § 5, Husserl had affirmed that in order to determine an indexical's concrete meaning, a pertinent act of imagination could do just as well as an appropriate perception. Now, however, he argues that an individual meaning (which as such must of necessity point to something real) cannot use acts of imagination as its surrogates. Every thing of nature can be meant (and be recognized) as being individually the same only by means of various acts of the *same* sort (e.g., through various perceptions). Yet acts of imagination cannot be synthesized with acts of perceptions in such a way as to form a homogeneous whole, i.e., one which would present the very same thing. Therefore the meaning of an act directed at a real thing differs from the meaning this thing has when conceived in imagination; the second is a modification of the first; and this is to say that it is not identical with it.

What brought about this switch in Husserl's conception? A clue can be found in a footnote appended to Husserl's *Formal and Transcendental Logic* of 1929 where he remarks that in the *Logical Investigations* he had not really succeeded in coming to terms with indexicals since he "did not yet dispose of the doctrine of horizonal intentionality." It is only due to this intentionality that the surrounding world of daily life can be said to be the world we experience as being real (*Hua* XVII, 207).

Indeed, in Investigation I, § 28, Husserl had said that all indexicals could at least in principle be replaced by objective terms. True, he had conceded that we are unable to determine, e.g., the time or place of a thing other than by relating it to some individual thing already pregiven. But "in itself, each place must differ from all others" (*Hua* XIX/1, 96; this paragraph has characteristically been omitted in the second edition of the work). This is to say that, from the point of view of Husserl's first theory, the difference between objective meanings and indexicals is merely accidental; it is due to factual limitations of our cognition. In what one could call a Newtonian (as well as a Brentanian) vein, Husserl conceives of space and time possessing intrinsic differences, whether we do or do not experience them, i.e., whether we are able to relate them to ourselves as persons having experiences here and now. With regards to meanings referring to a given point of space or time, it is consequently not in principle essential that the experiencing person be actually present in this spatiotemporal system. For such a point of reference can -- even though *in principle* only -- be dispensed with. The same applies to individual things occurring on this field, and to which indexicals may refer. Since the regularities of space and time are intrinsically different from every other, it makes no difference whether a concrete thing present at that given place or time is actually there or is only imagined to be there. In both cases it has only the subsidiary function of furnishing an auxiliary instrument for our speaking about the place or time in question.

In 1911 Husserl performed what we might refer to as a Kantian move. He now became aware of the fact that space and time are "real" (in the sense of having determinations of their own) only insofar as they can be related to veridical acts of experience, that is, of material things. They are nothing but *horizons* of real things, and as such are in the same way tied to experiential acts as are concrete things. All judgments about the spatiotemporal world, this is to say, are rooted in actual experience and in the experiencing person. They all refer to our experience and therefore contain, be it in a direct or in an indirect way, indexicals as constitutive elements. We arrive at a *Welt* only by means of an *Umwelt*. This concerns judgments about individual things as well as general judgments about the spatiotemporal world as a whole. Only those meanings are truly "objective" that remain identical whether they be applied either to this world or, e.g., to an imagined world and so remain unaffected by the existence or annihilation of reality. Among such objective meanings belong, Husserl says,

"the pure concepts of time, the pure geometrical and phoronomic concepts. Yet no real time determination can be effected by pure concepts of time, and no real spatial determination by purely geometrical concepts. The individual points to which all determinations of individual things refer, the zeros of the coordinates, are occasionally determined: we refer to the sun, the terrestrial plane, to the birth of Christ and so on" (*Hua* XIX/2, 817).

This distinction between pure and what one could call "impure" concepts echoes another distinction made by Husserl between an *apriori* eidetic ontology of nature and a phenomenology of thing and space as perceived empirical realities. Just as real nature is a case of nature as such, so empirical meanings are "ideas with irreplaceable empirical ingredients" (*Hua* XXVI, 217).[16] It is these empirical ingredients which insert these ideas into the horizon of the real world. Correspondingly one may say that "empirical meanings cannot be severed from the acts and therefore also not from the persons" (*Hua* XXVI, 211). Empirical judgments, be they singular or universal (in the sense of laws of nature), inevitably refer to this "centre of experience", to this "flowing point of orientation" (*Hua* III/2, 520).[17]

The text just quoted -- it was written in May 1912 -- is of particular interest, since it points to a possible further development of the Husserlian doctrine. In Investigation I, § 26, Husserl had linked the distinction between objective and occasional expressions to that between theoretical and practical judgments, i.e. between judgments occurring in science and those performed in daily life. Moreover he had affirmed that in principle all occasional and practical judgments could be translated into objective and scientific ones. In Investigation VI, § 5, Husserl had neutralized this question by affirming that all meanings, be they objective or subjective, depend on special meaning-bestowing acts. In Husserl's third theory, the distinction reappears. It is one more sign, by the way, that this theory was grafted upon the first, not upon the second one. This time, Husserl distinguishes between judgments about essences (the truth of which remains the same, whether this essence is exemplified in the real world or only in an imaginary one) and judgements about empirical matters of fact. Now in May 1912 Husserl once more tends to give up this distinction, but this time by subsuming even objective meanings under indexical ones. The horizon, he says, in which a judgment like "all bodies are heavy" is true, "is not merely a horizon conceived in thought, but the one posited by the here and now I experience." One

can in imagination cut the tie linking such judgments to the actual here and now and, e.g., limit one's judgment to what pertains to body purely as such. In all judgments of that type, i.e., in all purely chronological, purely geometrical, etc. judgments, we are "free from all reference to the *hic et nunc* given in experience." But, Husserl goes on to say, this does not mean that we would have achieved a hypothetical pure objectivity. Rather, "the *hic et nunc* itself is ideal" (*Hua* III/2, 522f).

With some hindsight this somewhat cryptic remark may be said to go some way towards Husserl's last work on the *Crisis of European Sciences*, where he was to declare that the very idea of science had not only grown out of an original life-world, albeit through complex processes of abstraction and idealization, but also that it was forever bound to depend on the needs and developments of this world of ours.

## Mohanty's Reading of Husserl's Doctrine

Even in view of the restricted basis of material presently available in print, the above presentation of Husserl's theory, or rather, theories of indexicals is by no means exhaustive. It is above all the detailed study of particular indexicals that had to be left aside here in favour of working out some of the more general lines of Husserl's thinking. To begin with, I have not sufficiently underlined Husserl's interest in the logical structure and function of the term "this" which is evidenced not only by a long *Beilage* to Investigation I, § 26 (see *Hua* XIX/2, 812ff.), but also by *Ideas I*, § 14 and by Husserl's 1918 Bernau manuscripts on the notions of thisness and of the *tode ti*. There is also much more to be said on the term "I" which in Husserl quickly turned from being an indexical (and therefore in some sense an expression depending on something else, namely on a given bodily situation) into a substance-like "transcendental" something or even a Leibnizian monad. Moreover one could mention Husserl's treatment of speech acts like commanding, asking, etc., which according to him have indexicals among their component parts.

Yet it has become clear that throughout his career Husserl maintained the indexical's essential linkage to (the world of) perception. Where he had first set out to look for the indexical's meaning in the very act of perception itself, he

afterwards intercalated a special class of acts between perception and this meaning, and finally recognized that perception as such inevitably gives rise to indexicals, so that all empirical meaning is interspersed with indexicals. Moreover, notwithstanding his efforts in a transcendentalist direction, Husserl always insisted on the essential relation between indexicals and -- as mediated by perception -- the real person who is the subject of that perception. Rather than being instrumental in Husserl's move from the species theory of meaning in *Logical Investigations* to the noema theory of *Ideas I*, as has been suggested by some commentators on Husserl, the problem of indexicals might rather in part have been responsible for the later Husserl's *failure* to work out a theory of what would amount to the transcendental constitution of the life-world, i.e., of the concrete world of perception.[18] Maybe the inconclusiveness of Husserl's later discussions of empirical meanings could be read as confirming this suspicion.[19] In that case, the problem of indexicals and the way in which Husserl in the course of his development tried to deal (or, rather, to dispense) with it, could itself be used as an indicator pointing towards a certain failure of Husserl's transcendental programme.

As was remarked above, the textual evidence for the nature of and the developments in Husserl's views on indexicals remains unsatisfactory even today. This was still more so when J.N. Mohanty in 1964 first published his *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*,[20] actually the first scholarly work to pay attention to Husserl's theory of indexicality (and of speech acts in general). Mohanty was perfectly right in concentrating his treatment exclusively on the *Logical Investigations*, and moreover in relying upon the 1928 edition of this work, i.e., on its fourth edition which is actually Husserl's *Ausgabe letzter Hand*. Now this edition is a reprint of the 2nd edition of 1913/1921 which, as already noted, had in part ironed out the discrepancies persisting in the first edition between the theories contained in the First and the Sixth Investigations. Thus Mohanty neither could be aware of a development in Husserl's views, nor speculate about the direction it took.

All the more remarkable, then, is the insight he displays into the main aspects of Husserl's view. In his attempt to criticize the doctrine of the *Logical Investigations*, Mohanty affirms that indexicals cannot "be idealized by being detached from the context."[21] Therefore Husserl's earlier attempt to eliminate them is judged to be defective: "the 'this' is a category of the real world, and

not of the realm of essences -- to use the language of naive ontology."[22] All this is indubitably correct -- moreover, as was seen above, it is in fact a view Husserl himself finally arrived at. Now, the very fact that Mohanty reasons here along the very same lines as Husserl had done is important, for it amounts to an independent confirmation of the coherence of Husserl's own development. It shows moreover that this development tends mostly naturally toward a "naive"-- or, as I would prefer to put it, a realistic -- ontology, rather than toward a transcendental metaphysics in the sense the later Husserl tried to develop.

Mohanty also calls indexicals "semi-conceptual" because of their inevitable dependence on a given situation.[23] This is no doubt correct, and the more so given that it is in accordance with what Husserl himself says in Investigation I. A term like "this" or "I" is clearly of another type and structure as opposed not only to formal concepts like "unity" or "connection", but also to material ones such as "house" or "tree". Mohanty is right in keeping apart such different terms according to his "principle of phenomenological discontinuity".[24] Yet it seems that one of the lessons of Husserl's later development consists in suggesting that these distinctions point to different *ways* in which the concepts in question are blended with indexicality, rather than that this situation would allow for distinguishing concepts unadulterated by indexical admixture from other ones containing such ingredients.

The rationale behind Mohanty's positing a discontinuity between semi-conceptual indexicals and truly conceptual meaning is clear: it is his Platonic interpretation of Husserl's theory of meaning. Accordingly, he postulates for Husserl's theory in the *Logical Investigations* a dualism between meanings "that are capable of idealization and those that resist such idealization."[25] As a general description, this interpretation covers in fact not only the two theories represented in the first edition of this work, but also Husserl's later distinction between empirical and "pure" meanings.

Yet when looked at in detail, it obviously allows for qualifications. This is suggested already by the fact that, in the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl calls meanings the *species* of certain acts, thus applying an Aristotelian, rather than a Platonic term (as "idea" would be).[26] But, more importantly, Mohanty himself points in this direction. He does not distinguish indexical and non-indexical meanings merely as two kinds of ideal meanings, i.e., as reflecting a split *within* the sphere of idealities. Rather he sees them as, on the one hand, meanings that

allow for idealization and, on the other hand, those that bear in themselves the power to *resist* idealization. Instead of being reduced to a shadowy realm, to a flux of ever-changing particulars, the domain of indexicals rather possesses the momentum of unfolding a world of meanings of its own: meanings, that is, that cannot be reduced to so-called "pure" concepts.

In short, Mohanty is right in attributing to Husserl a dualistic theory of meaning. And he is right also in pointing out the limitations of Husserl's alleged Platonism. Wherever there are indexical meanings, there also will be objective ones. However, the opposite thesis cannot be substantiated. Objective, e.g., purely formal, meanings do not themselves demand a realization and concretization that would imply of necessity indexicality. Yet even our vista of such unconditioned points of view, of "possible" worlds, clearly depends on our rootedness in a world that has a meaning for us only insofar as we make use of indexicals.

## NOTES

1. Husserl's works are quoted in what follows according to the Husserliana edition, the usual abbreviation *"Hua"* preceding the number of the volume and page. The *Logische Untersuchungen* occupy vols. XVIII, XIX/1 and XIX/2 of the Husserliana series. Special thanks are due to Barry Smith for kindly criticizing and ameliorating earlier versions of this paper.

2. David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language* (D. Reidel: Dordrecht - Boston - London, 1982), p. 214.

3. In what follows, I will for brevity's sake mostly use the term "indexicals". Linking Husserl's views to those of more recent authors who have made important contributions to the problem of indexicals (such as Y. Bar-Hillel, W.V.O. Quine, D. Kaplan, H.-N. Castañeda), falls however outside the scope of the present paper. Also such "classical" authors as Russell, Reichenbach, Bühler or Wittgenstein will be ignored.

4. Husserl also mentions certain expressions that include use of the definite article: "When in the evening we ask for *the* lamp, everybody means his own one" (*Hua* XIX/1, 91). Whether such cases indeed constitute a class of their own is however subject to doubt. Husserl could have taken over the discussion of this class of expressions from a similar one in Bolzano's *Wissenschaftslehre*, Sulzbach 1837, vol.I, p. 259.

5. This is why according to Husserl subjective expressions generally "serve the practical interests of everyday life", whereas the objective ones are for the most parts terms functioning in scientific theories (*Hua* XIX/1, 87). Concerning this point, Manfred Sommer is right in stating (somewhat bluntly) that "the occasional expressions are life-world expressions" ["Einleitung: Husserls Göttinger Lebenswelt", in his edition of Edmund Husserl, *Die Konstitution der geistigen Welt*, (Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1984), p. xiv].

6. See Kevin Mulligan and Barry Smith, "A Husserlian Theory of Indexicality", *Grazer Philosophische Studien* 28 (1986), p. 139f.

7. The manuscript of the *Prolegomena* was finished around December 1896, and it is likely that Husserl's change of view took place in 1898. Since this change concerns mainly the role of perception in constituting the meaning of indexicals, it is tempting to link it to his working out of the (still unpublished) manuscripts on perception in summer 1898. See my *Husserl-Chronik* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), p. 54f.

8. On the notion of "truths in themselves" see Bolzano, *Wissenschaftslehre*, vol. I, § 25. In the *Prolegomena*, "truth in itself" is dealt with only in passing, e.g., at *Hua* XVIII, 75 and 125. The most conspicuous mention occurs on p. 231, where Husserl affirms that "truth in itself is the necessary correlate of being in itself."

9. In Investigation I, § 26, Husserl had said that the primary meaning of "here" lies "in the actual presentation of this place itself". In harmony with his second theory, in the additions Husserls appended to *Logical Investigations*, vol. II, he remarked that this phrase must "of course" be changed into: "the proper meaning of the word becomes constituted only on the basis of the actual presentation of this place" (*Hua* XIX/1, 90).

10. See my *Husserl-Chronik*, 117f. Also Erich Heinrich in his *Untersuchungen zur Lehre vom Begriff* (Göttingen: Kaestner, 1910), a Ph.D. dissertation written under Husserl in Göttingen, distinguishes between "deictic" and other sorts of concepts.

11. *Husserl-Chronik*, p. 127f.

12. This long text replacing most of Investigation I, § 26 has been published in 1984 in *Hua* XIX/2, 812-816.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 812. I did not manage to identify this convolute. It is referred to also in another note in Husserl's personal copy of the *Logical Investigations*: "Cf. in convolute ($\mu$) the pages on pointing-to and meaning (*Hindeutung und Bedeutung*)" (Hua XIX/1, 794).

14. This text was introduced into Husserl research originally by Rudolf Bernet in his "Bedeutung und intentionales Bewußtsein: Husserls Begriff des Bedeutungsphänomens", *Phänomenologische Forschungen* 8 (1979), p. 50f. Yet he neglected its appurtenance to the revision of *Logical Investigations* and moreover assigned an erroneous date to it (1908). These errors were taken over by Herman Philipse, "The Problem of Occasional Expressions in Edmund Husserl's *Logical Investigations*", *Journal of the British Society*

*for Phenomenology* 13 (1982), p. 176, and Kevin Mulligan and Barry Smith, "A Husserlian Theory of Indexicality", p. 155.

15. *Husserl-Chronik*, p. 156.

16. For lack of pertinent material in Husserl's published texts I will refrain from entering into a discussion of the question why, in which sense, to what degree, etc., Husserl apparently had given up, with regard to empirical meanings, the general doctrine of the *Logical Investigations* that *all* meanings were species of acts. However, it should be noted that Husserl in the manuscript under discussion does not unequivocally state that an empirical meaning is not an eidos, but simply says: "The result *seems* to be: empirical meaning is not an idea in the sense of an eidos" (Hua XXVI, 214; my emphasis). In a letter to Ingarden of 5 April 1918 he states that in the *Logical Investigations* he erroneously had conceived of senses of propositions as something species-like. In a note appended to this text, Ingarden rightly comments that this information "is not clear enough" [Edmund Husserl, *Briefe an Roman Ingarden* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), p. 10 and 140]. Any consideration of this question at the present moment, then, seems to be premature.

17. I explicitly quote from a manuscript written in the wake of the preparations of *Ideas I*, i.e., only one year after that pertaining to Investigation I, § 28, whose relevance for understanding Husserl's third theory of indexicals has not yet been recognized, even though it was published already in 1976. In both manuscripts, by the way, Husserl discusses the same example "Göttingen lies on the [river] Leine" (and not "on the Lahn", as I mistook it in *Hua* III/2,519 and 521).

18. Another argument in favour of this view is that, as Føllesdal and his school like to insist upon, the noema does not function only with regard to perception, but also plays a crucial role in Husserl's later understanding of concepts and propositions.

19. See, e.g., *Erfahrung und Urteil* (Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1976), p. 416ff.

20. In what follows I will, however, use the second edition: J.N. Mohanty, *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969).

21. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 78f.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. viii and 80.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

26. Mulligan and Smith even speak of "Husserl's Aristotelian theory of meaning" (cf. "A Husserlian Theory of Indexicality", p. 134). See also their review of the Husserliana edition of the *Logical Investigations* in *Grazer Philosophische Studien* 27 (1986), p. 206f.

# POSSIBLE "WORLDS": REMARKS ABOUT A CONTROVERSY

**Thomas M.Seebohm**

J.N. Mohanty is one of the few phenomenologists who has been able to enter a fruitful discussion with analytical philosophy. Most significant in this respect are his writings on Frege. But there is another area which also deserves attention. It is his discussion of Jaakko Hintikka's attempt to explicate Husserl's concept of intentionality in terms of intension, more precisely, the concept of intension which has been developed in the framework of the so-called possible world semantics. Fourteen years after Mohanty's famous paper[1] the situation has changed. Thus it is meaningful to reconsider some aspects of the controversy. Before doing so a brief recapitulation of some points of the controversy is necessary.

Hintikka's significant contribution in the *early* phase of the development of modal logic was to transform Quine's well-known criticism. Quine pointed out that the operators introduced by modal logic had an affinity to particles expressing propositional attitudes, i.e., particles followed by "...that ('p')", and furthermore violated the principle of strict extensionality by assuming that we can speak about essences and intensions in the language of modal logic. Searching for "models for modality", Hintikka used just these two points in order to show the universal applicability of the new post classical logic. What was considered to be a weakness was now used to show the strength of the new formalism. His attempt to include also Husserl's concept of intentionality is, as Mohanty pointed out, a specific extension.[2] All other applications are applications -- I use phenomenological argot here -- on the predicative level, i.e., on the proper level for logical investigations. Hintikka argued, however, that also the intentionality on the level of prepredicative perception is a model for modalities.

Mohanty admits the possibility of an application of the technical apparatus of possible world semantics for two cases which can loosely, and with



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 129–143.

qualifications, be connected to the phenomenological concept of intentionality. Fregean senses can be understood as "counterparts" of Husserlian noemata on the predicative level, i.e., they are noemata connected with a sign and thus the sense of the sign. Their directedness towards the object can then be reconstructed *also* in terms of possible worlds semantics, though this reconstruction *cannot* count as an explication of Husserlian intentionality.

> To know the meaning of a term -- say "red" -- is to know what it is to be red, which includes the ability to recognize a thing as red under various different circumstances. That the concept of the "meaning" of a term has something to do with that of "possibility" -- and both with that of "essence" -- cannot be denied.[3]

Mohanty also admits that descriptions of the form "I perceive ('p')" can be treated meaningfully in terms of possible worlds semantics. Given such a description all possible states of affairs can be divided in two groups: those that are compatible with p and those that are not.[4] According to Mohanty, this statement is true and also forms the main support of Hinttikka's appeal to "possible worlds". But it does not describe perceptual experience. Rather it concerns what must be the case if a perceptual statement is true. The statement tells us something about the truth conditions of statements about perceptions at the level of formal logic. It is, however, not a phenomenological statement and it contributes nothing to the phenomenology of perception. Mohanty adamantly denies that the concept of "possibility" -- which in the analysis of intentionality occurs as the indeterminacy of the horizon, especially at the level of perception-- can be explicated in terms of the "possibility" of possible world semantics. Given the scope of the discussion he could not give an explicit account of the nature of this "possibility", i.e., an account of the phenomenology of "modalising".[5] A careful investigation which takes as its point of departure the *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis* would prove his point. Since such investigations also have the goal of clarifying genetically the origin of categories -- including modal categories -- on the prepredicative level, some results concerning the ontological

difficulties of individuals, identity and essences in possible worlds can be discussed under these viewpoints. The task in this case would not be to point out the shortcomings of an explication of the phenomenological theory of perception as a "model of modality" but rather to offer a phenomenological critique of modal categories, including those treated in modern modal logic.[6]

The topics I want to consider in this essay are Mohanty's abovementioned qualifications. (1) Mohanty does not admit that anything is gained by applying the technique of possible worlds semantics to phenomenological investigations or by explicating phenomenological concepts with them. What he admits is that, seen from a phenomenological point of view, nothing is wrong in the application of this technique for special cases in logical investigations. (2) Nevertheless Mohanty has strong reservations about the "ontology" connected with this semantics. He uses a quote from Hintikka himself to illuminate the reasons for his doubts.

> It would be more natural to speak of different possibilities concerning our 'actual' world than to speak of several possible worlds. For the purpose of logical and semantical analysis, the second locution is more appropriate than the first, however, although I admit that it sounds somewhat weird and perhaps also suggests that we are dealing with something much more unfamiliar and unrealistic than we are actually doing.[7]

In his response, Hintikka seems to assume that Mohanty's ontological doubts are connected with the reification of possible worlds, and denies that he defends such a reification.[8] In other words, Hintikka rejects the "realism" of D.K. Lewis.[9] However this cannot be all that Mohanty has in mind. In section III of his paper, we find an extended analysis of Husserl's theory of quasi-positional acts and the "fictional entities" which are the objects of such acts. According to the conceptualist interpretation of possible world semantics, other possible worlds are represented in fictions. Mohanty claims that Husserl's quasi-positional worlds lack unity of contexts and a unified framework, and for this reason it must be

said that identical individuals in the proper sense exist only in the actual world. Thus Husserl's quasi-positional worlds -- though they are constitutive for a certain conception of "possibility" -- cannot be explicated with the "possible worlds" of the new semantics.[10] In his response, Hintikka claims further for his interpretation of "possible worlds" that "we cannot even hope to operate actually with any possible world as a completed whole."[11] Seen from a certain point of view this is true, especially for his own specific "linguistic" interpretation. If a possible world is represented in a maximally consistent set of statements, then it can be assumed that this formal idea of such a completed set may be represented with fictional content only by a small subset of statements. All others are added only via the formal rules of construction for such sets which do not require any knowledge of the actual fictional meaning of the statements added. Thus, seen from this viewpoint, he can indeed claim that a possible world is not fully determined in his interpretation. The main problem is not that Hintikka's interpretation can nowadays be considered too narrow, because it excludes some technically interesting developments.[12] Rather, seen from the viewpoint of a phenomenological "semantics", the basic problem is its ambiguity. Though we do not know what the statements tell us, nevertheless, according to the rule of construction, we have to assume that they are "true" with respect to a world and hence also that this world is fully determined. It is fully determined in the same way in which our world, considered as a correlate of a maximally consistent set of statements, is considered to be fully determined in classical semantics. That means, however, that identical individuals are formalistically supposed to exist in this possible world as well as in our world. This ambiguity can be considered today under some viewpoints which were not yet given ten years ago.

There are at least some logicians and philosophers belonging to the analytical tradition for whom some of Quine's doubts concerning modal logic are not removed but rather confirmed in the development of the semantics of possible worlds, especially on the level of predicate logic. Already the controversy which surfaces in Mohanty's essay[13] between Platinga and Hintikka about transworld or worldbound identity of individuals indicates that it might be "hopelessly obscure what it was that quantified modal logics quantify over."[14] The "referential opaqueness" of modal propositional logic leads to a metaphysical jungle, an ontological slum.[15] For Quine the jungle consists in the very possibility of admitting some entities about which the language of classical logic

could not speak at all, e.g., essences. However, recent handbooks show where the real problem is. They mention many classes of models for predicate logic, many ways of distributing individuals to worlds and of defining stronger or weaker types of identity for different systems of predicate logic under one class of models, e.g., S5. The problem is that the formalism as such allows us to construct formally correct semantical systems which imply different ontological assumptions. For example, formal systems can be constructed in a way which admits individual essences but also in a way which does not. They can be constructed with worldbound individuals, with individuals having transworld identity, and also with the possibility or not of talking about essences, and all of this can be done with many modifications. The language of classical logic has an austere but rigid and unambiguous ontology if it is understood under the objective interpretation of the quantifiers. However, the technical apparatus of the semantics of modal logic provides us with several kinds of options, and thus the formalism does not *per se* answer ontological questions. Such questions can again be topics for traditional philosophical disputes. In other words, instead of logic as philosophy we have a philosophy of logics.[16]

A further problem is that these options are "suggestive" for specific treatments of ontological problems connected with the status of possible worlds. It is already obvious from the discussion between Mohanty, Hintikka and -- in the background -- Platinga, that a transworld identity of individuals is not "suggestive" of a reification of possible worlds, but a worldbound interpretation is very suggestive for such an interpretation, as the example of D.K. Lewis shows. Thus Hintikka's defense of ontological ideas, which are somehow close to Mohanty's and Husserl's in his eyes, is not a matter of possible worlds semantics as such. He has rather chosen a function of assigning individuals to worlds which admit certain assumptions concerning entities and would have been excluded by choosing another assignment function.

What happens here on the level of predicate logic is foreshadowed on the level of propositional logic. "Accessibility relations" between possible worlds seem to be innocent abstract mathematical entities. But the different propositional attitudes are defined precisely by means of the accessibility relations. There are now some "propositional attitudes" which immediately demand that "possible worlds" have to be understood as index points in our world, and the accessibility relations connecting them are relations in the actual world, e.g., temporal

relations.[17] There are others, like the alethic modalities which require or are more "akin" to the so-called possible world realism of D.K. Lewis. Thus the problem of the ontological ambiguity of the formal machinery of the possible worlds semantics surfaces already on the propositional level.

Husserl's phenomenological semantics, the "logic of truth" which he also calls the theory of modalising,[18] has a prepredicative and a predicative level. The prepredicative level of passive synthesis and the synthesis of imagination have a structure which determines the categorical structure of the predicative level. The analysis of this level is "semantical", because the protocategorical forms have their genesis in structures of positive and negative fullfillment. The determination of the categorical structures of the predicative level by the structure of the prepredicative level "explains" the objective validity of the categories, i.e., it shows that such a Kantian problem of the objective validity of categories "solves itself" in the context of a Husserlian transcendental aesthetics which is at the same time the foundation for a transcendental logic. It is, however, sufficient for the limited purposes of a phenomenological analysis of certain difficulties in formal logical semantics to restrict the considerations to the predicative level. The reader has only to keep in mind that the concept of the "real world in which we live" presents a reality which is in the final instance grounded in passive synthesis in its content and form and is, hence, given independent of all "acts" of the subject.

Unqualified "truth" on the predicative level is the complete correspondence *(Deckung)* of the state of affairs meant in the judgment and the state of affairs, if and only if the judgment is given in perfect predicate evidence, i.e., in perfect categorical articulation, and the state of affairs is given in perfect prepredicate evidence. Unqualified falsehood is given under the same conditions if there is a discrepancy between the state of affairs meant and the state of affairs. It is often not seen that "evidence" in Husserl refers not only to the present and "truth" but in the same degree also to the absent and "falsity". In the judgmental activity of the lifeworld, but also of the sciences, truth and falsity are "modalised". That is, even if the predication is affirmative and no modal operator occurs in it, the predication is in the overwhelming majority of the cases accompanied by some insecurity which is not articulated categorically. The same holds for negative judgments as well. A more thorough analysis of this fact would have to turn to the prepredicative level and the role which expectation,

confirmed expectation, disappointed expectation, disjunctively split expectation, etc., play in the genesis of logical forms.

What has been said belongs to the phenomenology of doxic-thetic judgmental activity in the lifeworld, i.e., to the judgmental activity in "ordinary language". Taken for itself it has no significance for formal logic, with the exception, perhaps, that it indicates clearly that our experience of the real world in which we live is in every respect "modalized" and that this "modalization" has many different forms which are expressed on the predicative level with particles indicating "propositional attitudes". We reach the level of classical logic through (1) a reflection on the difference of state of affairs meant and state of affairs in general, (2) a formalising abstraction, and (3) an idealisation. (2) and (3) are onesidedly founded in (1). The formalising abstraction "grasps" the categorical form and represents all the contents which are given in this form -- the *kategorische Stoffe* belonging to this form, e.g., sentences in the case of sentence connectives -- to be represented by "variables". The idealisation considers for all substitution instances of the variables only unqualified truth and falsity in the sense mentioned, i.e., it eliminates "modalization". Under these presuppositions the two logical principles of non-contradiction and the excluded middle are valid without qualification: "a statement is either true or false, never both, and a third is not given". Traditional non-formalised logic is grounded in the same type of idealisation. What is missing is a completed formalising abstraction. Thus traditional logic is not able to spell out the necessary consequences, i.e., the definitions of the connectives representing categorical form by means of the principles.

Seen from the point of view of phenomenological semantics the basic question for the idea of a semantics of possible worlds is: what has happened to the concept of world under the idealisation which is the basis of classical logic? Since the semantics of possible worlds is nothing but an extension of classical logic, its concept of world will depend on the concept of world which has been developed already on this level. Given this idealisation one can "think" the "world" as the sum total of the state of affairs which correspond to the set of true statements. Since the two principles of logic hold, (a) there is no modal operator possible with respect to this world, (b) the set of true statements must be a consistent set, and (c) those statements to which nothing that is the case in the world corresponds are false.

This "world" of the logician, the Wittgensteinian sum total of everything which is the case, has the character of a world in itself, i.e., the world as it is without our subjective and relative thoughts and our always modalised judgments. Thus -- and this is essential -- this conception of "world" must be distinguished not only from the quasi-positional fictional worlds but also from the real world in which we live. *De re* modalities are characteristic for the ontological structure of the real world. It is, e.g., an open question whether there will be a sea battle tomorrow. The real world knows temporal structures. Quine recognized clearly that the "world" about which the language of formalized logic speaks does not admit propositional attitudes and hence also none of the temporal structures of the "real" world. According to Quine, the only candidate for a representation of the world of logic is the atemporal world of modern physics in which the individuals are the "points" in the four-dimensional spatio-temporal field and the predicates the events given in them.[19] It is essential to remember that the worldview of science -- and especially physics -- confronts us with worlds which are also "worlds in themselves" and different from the world as it appears to us, i.e. the real world in which we live. But not all of these worlds are candidates for being the world about which a logic, like classical logic with no knowledge of modal operators, speaks. It is, hence, wrong to identify the "world in itself" of logic with the "world in itself" of physics. The abstractions and idealisations which are essential for many physical theories are much less radical than the formalising abstraction and the idealisation which leads to the unqualified true/false dichotomy of classical formalised logic.

The "semantics of possible worlds" presupposes the basic abstractions and idealisations of classical logic. In the overwhelming number of classes of models which have been developed, the logical principles are valid without qualification with respect to each possible world. For every world, it holds that it can be understood as the sum total of states of affairs for which a certain set of statements is true. It is also assumed that this set will be a consistent set. But so-called non-normal systems in which basic principles of logic are violated have been introduced.[20] There are other systems which have -- for valid intuitive reasons as we have seen -- truth value gaps. Such radical extensions, however, only show once again the ontological ambiguity of the technical apparatus.

Setting aside such extensions (which require abstractions going even further than those which determine the "world in itself" of logic), it can be said that the

possible "worlds" of the new semantics are "logical worlds" in the sense which is predetermined in the concept of world of classical logic. This assertion is not grounded in any linguistic, ontological or epistemological interpretation of "possible worlds". It is simply a question of the techniques used already at the level of propositional logic. Seen from this viewpoint all other interpretations are always only in some aspects true and wrong in all other aspects. Their being "wrong" is in the final instance grounded in the equivocations in the concept of "world".

The equivocation is given to the extent that the term "world" can refer on the one hand to the world which is the world in itself of logic and on the other hand to the world which is the real world in which we live. "Realism" with respect to possible worlds is tempting, because to assume that a possible world makes a certain set of statements true and its complement false is to "think" the possible world is a "world in itself" in the same way as the actual world of classical logic. It is a deeply rooted prejudice, which is again grounded in an equivocation, that the world "in itself" is the real world and the world in which we exist is an "appearance". This is to a certain degree correct with respect to the "world in itself" of science. It is meaningful to speak about the physical reality. But the "world in itself" of logic is already for classical logic the result of a much more radical abstraction. Hence the "world in itself" of logic no longer has anything in common with the world on which it is true -- with the admixture of a low degree of uncertainty -- that, e.g., the genetical make up of kangaroos is such that they have tails and do not topple over.[21] Thus the concept of world in the logical sense cannot be transferred to or be said to underlie the conception of the real world in which we live where there are concrete cases of statements that are materially true.

It is a mistake as well to assume that "possible worlds" are "real" in the sense in which logical and mathematical objects are supposed to exist in so-called Realism or Platonism. This can be accepted only as long as we consider the whole semantics of possible worlds as an ideal entity belonging to the types of ideal entities which we find in set theory. It is still in a certain sense possible to consider the function, which assigns sentences to worlds in which these sentences are true, not simply as a function but as a function which assigns truth values. However, in the framework of the so-called "realism" with respect to ideal objects, it is impossible to assume that this function assigns a concrete statement about some non-stubnosed Socrates to a fact in some possible world in which it

is true. A possible world to which concrete statements are assigned as true in this world cannot be understood as an ideal logico-mathematical entity: it will be real not in the ideal sense but in a very real material sense. Secondly, as already mentioned, for the purposes of logic it is neither possible nor necessary to make any assumption about the actual truth value of some concrete statement in the "world in itself" of formal logic. It is enough for this purpose to assume that the principles hold for this statement.

With respect to conceptualism, Mohanty, as discussed above already, mentioned the basic difficulties connected with the interpretation of the possible worlds of logic as quasi-positional worlds of fiction. We discussed in the last paragraphs the difference between the real world in which we live and the "world in itself" of logic. But it is obvious that the quasi-positional worlds of fiction are quasi-positional "real" worlds. Husserl said that all doxic-thetic modalities which can be found in the real world are given in such quasi-positional worlds as well. Hence they cannot represent the "world in itself" of logic. It is very difficult to imagine what kind of mind could have possible worlds as its objects. The assumption of more than one world is rare in the history of philosophy. Setting aside the idea of a sensible and a supersensible world -- which is for obvious reasons also not a candidate -- it is Leibniz to whom those who defend a conceptualistic interpretation refer. It is assumed that one has simply to drop the metaphysical "dressing" of Leibniz's theory in order to reach a meaningful explication. One has to keep in mind, however, that it is this metaphysical viewpoint which makes the whole idea acceptable. Possible worlds are thought to be the object of the infinite intellect of God before the creation. In order to select the best we have to assume that the infinite intellect "knows" precisely what is materially true and what is materially false in each of them. How is this possible? The only acceptable answer is that God can have such a knowledge because he has an infinite intellect. But here the ball stops. We as finite intellects by definition do not know how an infinite intellect works. Thus we do not know how to know possible worlds which are different from our actual world in the way God knows them. God's knowledge of possible worlds is not grounded in either the abstractions which lead to the concept of logic's "world in itself" or the multiplication of this world into the set of "possible worlds". Rather he really knows them in the same way in which the divine providence materially knows everything which was, is, and will be in our actual world. There is no way from God's possible world to logical "worlds in themselves" and no way from them

to quasi-positional worlds of fiction and vice versa. In order to start the construction of maximally consistent sets, no fiction is necessary. What is needed on the one hand is the assumption of a set of statements which are consistent. No other specifications are necessary. On the other hand, the further determination of a fiction is not interested in all statements which are consistent with the set of statements representing the fiction. The fact that certain minerals have been found on the moon is certainly consistent with the "fiction" represented by *Death in Venice*, but adds nothing which could be useful for the closing of gaps of information in it.

Every interpretation of "possible worlds" is absurd and bizarre if the attempt is made to understand it as a real or conceptual-fictional variant of the real world in which we live. Already the "world in itself" of classical logic has nothing in common with the real world in which we live. The "world in itself" of classical logic is nothing more than a set of states of affairs which can be described in a maximally consistent set of statements that are supposed to be true without qualification with respect to this set of states of affairs. Nothing more can be said about this world. Given this point of departure there is no difficulty in inventing other "worlds" of this sort. The assumptions that the complement of such a set has as subsets other consistent sets of statements and that such statements can be members of different sets is *a fortiori* legitimate for possible worlds of logic, because they are understood first of all as sets of states of affairs. In general, everything which can be meaningfully assumed about sets can be assumed about possible worlds. It is, hence, not even necessary to insist that they are represented by consistent sets of statements.

Classical formalized logic and its ontology require that all states of affairs be describable only in terms of abstract individuals, i.e., individuals which have only one "property", namely identity, and which are the bearers of *n-adic* predicates. It is questionable whether individuals of this sort are given in the real world in which we live. An investigation in the prepredicative realm could show that this is certainly not the case. The problem of "names" or individual constants illustrates this fact on the predicative level. If "names" are admitted into the language of formalised logic, they have to obey requirements which names in natural languages never fulfill. The only way of fulfilling these requirements in natural language would be to "name" things with numbers in order to check that no "name" refers to more than one individual. Names in natural language refer

to one thing only if they are context bound. That means, however, that they refer to individuals via n-adic predicates. The opinion of some philosophers[22] who say that the individual *is* the sum total of its real predicates doubtless has its own difficulties. It is, however, an opinion which is grounded in structures which belong to the real world in which we live.

Quine's interpretation of the individual variables on the level of ordinary language, as well as his presentation of the world of logic as the world of ideal science, illustrates the abstraction through which we get individual variables well. What corresponds to them in ordinary language are demonstrative pronouns, i.e., indicators of an empty place in which something is given. The individuals of his four-dimensional world are space-time points. Formalised classical logic, however, is not bound to a universe of discourse restricted to points in a space with a certain number of dimensions. The choice of a certain number of dimensions of a "space" determines certain relational predicates for the points, i.e., the individuals. Thus we have a certain model for predicate logic but not predicate logic of first order "for itself".

There is an assignment function which assigns individuals belonging to individual variables and, if admitted, constants to possible worlds. Regardless of how that is done the outcome will be bizarre if "world" is understood as a counterpart of the real world we live in and "individual" is understood as referring to the individuals we encounter in this world. However, if the world is understood as a set of state of affairs, nothing embarrassing happens. The individual variables for themselves are identities and they "bear properties", because there are assignment functions which assign them to sets. In classical logic, there is first of all the function which assigns the variable to the set selected by a property P. Classical logic is not a free logic. Thus there is also the tacit assumption that the variable is assigned to the set of identical entities which exist in the "actual world".

The foregoing considerations have shown that the sets of states of affairs, i.e., "worlds" in the sense of logic, do not have very much in common with the real world in which we live and are even different from the world "in itself" of science. Similarly it can be said that the individuals to which individual constants and individual variables refer do not have very much in common with the individuals of the real world, e.g., a stubnosed Socrates. It is "natural" for the "individual" represented by the individual variables to be assigned to or to be

selected for sets of any sort. This belongs to its "nature". It belongs to the nature of Socrates only to the extent that it is possible to perform a formalising abstraction on something he has in common with dungheaps and featherless chickens, namely that he is a "this here". There is no problem in assuming that the individuals which are "meant", "referred to" in a formalised language, can be assigned first to some set of state of affairs and then within that $W_i$ to the set which is selected by the predicate P. The very nature of a variable or a constant does not forbid that it be assigned to sets in other ways. Thus there is also no harm in assuming universe U to which all the individuals belong and letting them be connected with predicates in this universe and then be assigned to different sets of states of affairs.

The outcome of applying viewpoints taken from a phenomenological semantics on the level of predication to problems connected with the "possible worlds semantics" was that the "world" as it is to be understood in the context of formalised logic cannot be understood as some kind of concrete world, the real world in which we live, the "worlds" in quasi-positionality or worlds constructed in metaphysical speculations as correlates of other intellects. They are the result of a peculiar abstraction and idealisation which separates them in principle from all other conceptions of world. Thus the paradoxes which are connected with the attempts to connect the different concepts of "world" vanish. Quite another problem occurs which is a result of the separation. How can the explication of modal operators and other operators -- as well as some intensional relations by means of this abstract apparatus -- have objective validity for the explication of some categorical forms used in ordinary talk about the real world in which we live. Here we have a question about "objective validity" which belongs to transcendental logic. In the context of Husserl's phenomenology that means: it must be solved by means of an analysis of the genesis of these categorical forms in the prepredicative realm.

## NOTES

1. The paper read at the meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, Washington, D.C. 1978 is a critical discussion of J. Hintikka, *The Intentions of Intentionality and Other New Models for Modalities*, (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1969). It was published with the title "Intentionality and Possible Worlds: Husserl and Hintikka" in

*Husserl, Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, ed. H.L. Dreyfus, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), p. 233-55.

2. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

5. Edmund Husserl, *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*, Husserliana XI, (den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), Erster Abschnitt, "Modalisierung", pp. 25-64; cf. Edmund Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, (Claassen und Goverts, 1948), III. Kapitel, "Der Ursprung der Modalitäten des Urteils", pp. 325-80; *Experience and Judgement*, trans. J. Churchill and K. Ameriks, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), Part II, chap. 3, "The Origin of the Modalities of Judgement", pp. 271-313.

6. My considerations concerning this problem will be published in *Phänomenologische Forschungen* and the *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*.

7. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

8. Hintikka in his response in *Husserl, Intentionality and Cognitive Science, op. cit.*, p. 253.

9. D.K. Lewis, *Counterfactuals*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973). Here Lewis defends "realism". For Saul Kripke and others "conceptualism" is more convincing. For a survey of positions and references, see my *Philosophie der Logik*, (Freiburg: Karl Alber Verlag, 1984), pp. 202-218.

10. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

11. Hintikka, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

12. D.K. Lewis, *op. cit.*; cf. R. Montague, *Formal Philosophy*, ed. R. Thomason, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 148ff.

13. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

14. S. Haack, *Philosophy of Logics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 194.

15. W.V.O. Quine, "Three Grades of Modal Involvement", in *Proceedings of the XI International Congress of Philosophy* (14), p. 174. Cf. S. Haack, "Lewis's Ontological Slum" in *Review of Metaphysics XXX* (1977), pp. 415-429.

16. Cf. S. Haack, *Philosophy of Logics, op. cit.*

17. See for example A.N. Prior, *Past, Present, and Future*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967).

18. Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis, op. cit.*, Abschnitt II, pp. 65-100 and *Formal and Transcendental Logic,* trans. D. Cairns, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), chapter 5.

19. W.V.O. Quine, *The Way of Paradox and Other Essays*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 228-254, especially p. 237.

20. The difference between "normal" and "non-normal" was introduced by Saul Kripke, "Semantical Analysis of Modal Logic II" in *The Theory of Models*, ed. J.W. Addison et al, (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1965), pp. 206-220.

21. This is a variation of the example which has been repeatedly used by D.K. Lewis.

22. Kant explicates this ontological theory of individuality and its roots in the framework of traditional logic in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (B 599ff). He himself does not share this view, which was taken up again by others, particularly Hegel.

# HIGHER POSITIVISM

S.P. Banerjee

## I

In a paper entitled "Modes of Givenness"[1], written in 1958 in honor of Professor Josef König of the University of Göttingen, J.N. Mohanty speaks of a "higher positivism", which he has upheld, in contrast to a "lower positivism", which he has criticized. Throughout his career, he has been primarily concerned with modes of givenness as well as with the given. So in this paper I shall be concerned with explicating critically Mohanty's standpoint in propounding a "higher positivism".

For any system of philosophy there has to be a starting point, and philosophers in general try to start from the most fundamental issue which becomes the primitive in the system. It is the persistent attempt of such philosophers to show that a more fundamental position would be impossible. All this applies with greater strength in the case of phenomenology which claims to be "presuppositionless". So the concept of "the given" as well as the notion of "modes of givenness" are of foundational importance in phenomenology.

In the first two chapters of *Phenomenology and Ontology*, Mohanty has explored the given along with its modes, and has attempted to show that phenomenological exploration takes recourse to the given in a manner capable of explaining "things" and "persons" without engaging in reductionism and constructionism, which are invariably invoked in the "lower positivism" as found in Bertrand Russell and others. It will be our endeavor here to examine the claim and see if it can be sustained.



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 145–156.

## II

By "lower positivism" Mohanty has specifically in mind the theory of Bertrand Russell and not the theory of "logical positivism", although certainly some implications between the two could be drawn. Yet we prefer here to concentrate on what Mohanty clearly asserts and bypass the further implications or tangential references. Mohanty maintains that "positivism in some of its modern forms has taken recourse to constructions and reductions."[2] And to such forms, of which Russell's theory is an example, Mohanty is opposed. He thinks that the strength of positivism lies in its emphasis on the *given* as opposed to the constructed. His aim is to show that, in order to justify itself and be legitimate, positivism must not dogmatically cling to one "favored mode of givenness" and must "recognize a hierarchy of such modes." This is what he proposes to call "higher positivism".[3]

In order to understand Russell's position in some phases of his philosophical development in this connection, one has to take note of three of his books -- *The Problems of Philosophy, Our Knowledge of the External World,* and *The Analysis of Mind*. The development of his thinking as is evident in these books may be roughly described as a consistent application of Occam's razor which enunciates the principle -- "entities must not be multiplied without necessity."[4] Russell had seriously applied the principle and tried to weed out the inessential elements from the universe and reduce it to the minimum number of fundamental constituents.

In *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912) Russell brought in a fundamental and insightful distinction between *knowledge by acquaintance* and *knowledge by description*. "We have knowledge by acquaintance of everything of which we are directly aware without the intermediary of any process of inference or knowledge of truths."[5] Thus, according to Russell, when we know any physical object, such as the pen with which I am writing, it is not the pen itself that I know by acquaintance, but a number of *sense data,* such as hardness, roundness, blackness, and so on which make up the appearance of the pen. The knowledge of the pen itself is not direct; it is what Russell calls knowledge by description. Our acquaintance-knowledge of the sense-data and our knowledge of general truths about the sense-data known directly taken together seem to constitute the justifications for our assuming the existence of a physical object (pen) which is not directly known. All knowledge by description is found to involve some

knowledge of truths. At this stage of his philosophy, to make a long story short, Russell recognizes the existence of at least four different kinds of entities: (a) knowing minds, (b) sense data which are known by acquaintance, (c) universals which also are known by acquaintance, and (d) physical objects which are known by description.

Russell, however, ruthlessly applies Occam's razor and in *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) he approaches the problem from an entirely different point of view. He eliminates the physical object altogether. The external world is composed of sense data, and in our sensation we are aware of these sense data or sensible objects. Things or physical objects are logical constructions of the different appearances, sets of sense data being present to different persons. Different persons have different "perspectives" of the world, and a "thing" is but the correlation of different "perspectives". So, at this stage of his philosophical development, Russell eliminates the physical object of the commonsense world.

In his *Analysis of Mind* (1921) Russell proceeds further in his progressive elimination of entities. He tries to bring under one common heading sensations and sensible objects (sense data) -- psychology and physics. This is achieved not by merging sensations into sense data but by deriving both from a more fundamental stuff, i.e., "neutral particulars".

We thus see how Russell's attempt at eliminating the number of entities through the application of Occam's razor has almost taken his philosophical position to an alien universe far removed from what is ordinarily labelled as Realism or Idealism. Above all, our world of experience has been lost and the very significance of the *given* has been distorted. Mohanty not only registers his protest against this sort of absurd reductionism but also tries to offer an escape from this absurdity.

Positivism, as noted earlier, is certainly right in its emphasis on the *given.* But it involves itself in endless difficulties when it takes the sense data as the only given. Sense data cannot satisfactorily explain things and *universals.* And if one chooses to stick to sense data as the only given, concrete things and persons that we encounter cannot be adequately explained. The only course that remains open is to try to *construct* things out of sense data. But the difficulties of this position have been brought out by many including Stebbing and Max Black whom Mohanty also mentions. Stebbing has pointed out[6] that on Russell's theory every proposition about a material object is reducible to a number of hypothetical

propositions about one's future experience of things, and consequently every categorical statement about things will be rendered into a number of hypothetical statements involving a number of verifiable predictions. Black thinks that Russell is playing on an equivocation with regard to the term "meaning".[7] If Russell accepts the common usages of the term, his explanation about the thing-word is not tenable; if he introduces a new meaning, it could be shown to involve *petitio principii*. "Further considering the issue from the linguistic point of view, the symbols that are claimed to be completely translatable on the lines proposed by the theory must be demonstrated to be thoroughly *dispensable* which they, in fact, are not. Complete translation of the symbols in question is not possible. Ontologically, we may insist that the unity of a thing is totally different from the unity of a family, a series or a nexus of data. Epistemologically, it could be added that things are *given* in a way radically different from that in which sense data are given."[8]

What appears to be the grave mistake committed by Russell is that in his zeal for applying Occam's razor he has been tempted to think about the given in the wrong way and, as a result, what is actually given in our experience is reduced to sense data which in the last analysis might appear as abstractions from or derivatives of the things which are given in a *practical way*. If one starts with a theoretical outlook from the beginning, the thing which is given in a pre-theoretical attitude is sure to be missed. Starting with the thing as given one may analyze it into sense data through subsequent reflection. But from the point of view of givenness, the thing comes first and not sense data. Positivism of the Russellian type, "lower positivism" in Mohanty's language, commits the mistake of taking the sense data as the "absolute firsts" as it overlooks the pre-theoretical attitude where the thing is given.

Mohanty has provided an excellent pointer to "what 'to be given' does not mean"[9], and a careful consideration of these negative criteria will be profitable for us. One very common mistake which serious philosophers tend to commit is to take the given to be *analytically the simplest*. But it is not necessary that what is complex and structured could not have been given. Another misconception about the given is that it must be the "content" of our "immediate experience". These two terms "content" and "immediate experience" are misleading and are supposed to imply what one "enjoys" in his experience, e.g., pleasure or pain. They are immediately given to one's consciousness. But one

has to recognize that modes of consciousness to which anything is given are "self-transcending", and so to be given to consciousness does not necessarily imply its being a constituent of consciousness. There is a further mistake which may be traced back to Kant. It is to think that what is given is apprehended *passively* and the consciousness to which it is given has no role to play in contemplating it. We may note with interest that even one of the most brilliant and creative thinkers of contemporary India whom Mohanty holds in high esteem, Professor Kalidas Bhattacharyya, seems to have committed the same mistake when he writes about the given "as a feeling of *forced passivity* that immediately guarantees to us the existence of something foreign (non-reason). This is from the normal Realistic Standpoint."[10] And again, "Though sensing and perception are *passive* revelations of the given and, therefore, completely reliable, memory and thought are not so."[11] It is a very common tendency to accept our consciousness to be passive in the reception of the given, but one should not forget that even for this *reception/receiving* a sort of activity is called for. It is a philosopher's tendency to think that givenness and passivity in receiving them go together. What Mohanty tries to uphold is that these two are not necessarily related, and of the different elements that are given to our consciousness, things and persons are given in the *practical mode* rather than the theoretical.

One more misconception about the given has been noted by Mohanty. It is often supposed that the given must be "self-complete" "depending upon nothing and leading up to nothing else. This is also a variant of atomism and ill-conceived." The thing is never given in its entirety, and here the Gestalt theory of perception is nearer to the truth than any other theory.

The very important point that Mohanty makes about the modes of givenness is that there are *basically* two modes of givenness -- practical and theoretical. And about the nature of the given he maintains that among other diverse elements things and persons are given in the practical mode. The way in which the given of the theoretical mode is received is called *contemplation* and that of the practical is called *enjoyment*. These expressions have been taken from S.T. Alexander and the distinction has been clearly brought out in his book *Space, Time and Deity*. Things are given, as has been pointed out, in the practical mode, and the receiving person enjoys the thing through the fulfillment of his intention through which the thing appears as a *unity*, even though only the parts might have been given. As Mohanty states: "a physical object is given as the object of

a dominating intention that permeates and comprehends the awareness of its parts, and this object again leads up to further intentions in which larger unities are presented."[12].

Physical objects as objects of our use are primarily given in the practical mode. It is something which may offer us resistance, may be hard or cold and so on and so forth. This practical mode of givenness gives us the concrete thing with its unity, which is also the result of our intending it as a unity. In the theoretical mode, the thing disintegrates and is ultimately reduced to sense data with which the practical encounter is not possible. In the theoretical mode of givenness or in one's contemplative attitude towards the physical object one may cultivate the aesthetic attitude. Here too the concrete thing belonging to our lifeworld is lost and a sort of universal essence, *rasa,* is enjoyed. The physical object in its *concreteness* is primarily given in the practical mode. In the theoretical mode it is contemplated as sense-dator, in the aesthetic attitude as an object of aesthetic contemplation-enjoyment, and the analyst in the same positivism favors the sense data or the "qualia" of the thing in its abstraction as an object of enjoyment. Mohanty's "higher positivism" claims the primacy of the practical mode of the givenness of the physical object/thing, and shows that what the analyst (positivist) establishes as the primary given data -- sense data-- are nothing but abstractions of the thing, which would not have been there if the concrete thing was not given in the pre-theoretical attitude.

If an analogy with a similar case is in order one may recall Strawson's position in his *Individuals.*[13] Strawson finds in material bodies and persons his "basic particulars". The M-predicates (predicates implying material qualities, e.g., weight, height, location, etc.) and the P-predicates (thinking, acting, becoming anxious, etc.) can be ascribed to things and persons only on the presupposition of the primitiveness of things and persons. The Cartesian position, according to Strawson, committed the mistake of taking body and mind as primary instead of the person from which they are abstracted. Strawson here, though not explicitly, is taking recourse to phenomenological description of what is given and describes the given as the "primitives" in his system of descriptive metaphysics.

## III

What applies to things applies, perhaps *a fortiori*, to persons. Persons are given in the practical mode, and we *encounter* them and enjoy their *participation* in such encounters. Mohanty has brought in most appropriately the distinction made by Kant in his *Critique of Judgement* regarding the practical. It may be either *technically practical* or *morally practical*. "The physical object is disclosed through action which intends to use it as means to an end or which meets resistance from it. The person is disclosed through moral relationships whose essence, as Kant rightly saw, lay in acknowledging the other as an end in itself. Just as the physical object disintegrates into abstraction when made a subject of contemplation, so does the person tend to degenerate into a thing as the moral attitude is replaced by the pragmatic, as the end in itself comes more and more to be treated as a means to an end."[14]

Some doubts regarding the genuine character of the possibility of the person being given in direct experience have been cherished in some quarters since the days of Hume. Hume's attempts in liquidating the problem has sparked quite a few trends of thought to do the same on different grounds, and a linguistic/positivistic attempt at such liquidation is one of the main contemporary developments in Western philosophy deriving from Hume. Following Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*, these thinkers maintain that the "muddle of self-knowledge" as also certainly of our knowledge of other minds are due to our failure to follow the logical behavior of mental-conduct concepts or terms.

To make a brief digression, a sort of linguistic behaviorism fostered by Wittgenstein tried to prevent the shipwreck of the physicalistic psychology of Carnap and other earlier positivists. This ingenious and intriguing thesis of Wittgenstein captured the imagination of such acute minds as Ryle, Wisdom, Austin, and Malcolm. These thinkers on their turn have exhibited a readiness to brush aside the problem of self-knowledge and our encounter with others and have tried to dissolve it as a pseudo-problem. But this positivistic position is at best half-hearted. Intrigued by the counter-revolution of science against philosophy, the positivist and his successors in linguistic analysis summarily dismiss every problem which does not respond to their logical/linguistic therapy. Unsuccessful at bringing the diverse yet insistent modes of consciousness under some neat generality and under the spell of "objectivism", the positivist and the

linguistic philosopher fail to explain the reality of our knowledge of other selves. Laboring under the restrictions imposed by what Merleau-Ponty calls "objectivistic prejudices", they fail or, rather, refuse to reach the depth of the self and its encounter with the alter ego, and then promptly declare the uselessness of chasing a non-existent goose.

That things and persons are given to us may be denied only at the risk of ultimately landing in self-defeating positions like solipsism or skepticism (and as both are non-falsifiable, they are beyond the realm of philosophical discussion). A philosopher cannot legislate on what is given and how it is given. He can only discuss the modes of givenness, say, in cases of things and persons. The given in the practical mode is always *lived*; it is not determined by decision, still less by linguistic usage. This *lived given* is continuous and has no sharp boundary to it. The boundary is only conceptually imposed upon it. This lived given frustrates the abstractionist strategy frequently resorted to by the phenomenalists/positivists who try to escape the consequences of the lived given.

It has already been stated that persons are given in the practical mode, and we have further identified that mode as morally practical following Kant, in which each person is treated as an end in himself/herself. The active relation with the alter ego/person as given is the relation of *participation*. The objection that the given is given to a subject, yet a subject cannot be given to another subject without objectifying it, is pointless. For (a) we are not talking about the epistemic subject which cannot be given in the practical mode. We are talking of the *other as a person*. (b) To repeat a point already made, the given should not be confused as the immediate datum of experience to be received passively. The given is that which calls forth practical manipulation and activity on my part and in this sense it also has a function. The person given in the practical mode manifests its activity through deeper mutuality which prompts me to greater activity and so higher degree of participation. It leads not only to my enjoyment of the other in this participation, but also to my enjoyment of my own self.

We may especially refer here to Mohanty's two brilliant insights in this context. He thinks that a reconciliation between the two conflicting theories, those of "physical objects" and "sense data" in one case and "person" and "subject" on the other, can be attempted only by noting the modes of givenness in these two cases. Physical objects and persons are given in the practical mode; sense data and subjects in the theoretical mode. As Mohanty states, "...we could

attempt a reconciliation also of the two dominating theories about the nature of the self. According to one theory, the self is truly a person, a concrete existent being who is 'in the world' as much as 'with others'. According to the other theory, the self is a pure epistemological subject, a passive witness to the world and others, detached and contemplative. My contention here is that the person and the subject are *given* in two different attitudes: the former in a living, moral, evaluating relationship with others, the latter through contemplation on the implications of the attitude of pure understanding."[15]

Another significant insight of Mohanty consists in noting the difference between treating a person as an end in himself and as a means to an end. The former is the case when we encounter the person in the practical mode and the person is disclosed through the moral relationship. But this morally practical attitude degenerates into the theoretical/pragmatic attitude when the person becomes a means to an end. The question of participation does not arise at all, and the person becomes thing-like to be used for my end.

I have a hunch that this conception of the degeneration of the person into a thing-like position to be used for attaining one's selfish ends lies at the root of the Marxian concept of alienation. In the threefold dimension of alienation about which Marx speaks, this attitude seems to be the root cause of man's alienation and resultant dehumanization. When a person becomes a means to an end, he/she becomes a commodity, offered for sale and purchased under the economic laws of supply and demand in a capitalist society. The question of participation or communication becomes pointless between such persons, and the entire gamut of normal human and moral relationships becomes distorted and perverted.

This degeneration of normal human relationships may happen between a man and his wife when participation ceases and communication is snapped. The highest type of communication and participation is possible through love. In order to realize myself fully, I need the other -- the alter ego -- for my fulfillment and successful communication. It is a paradigm of moral relationship where both partners are fully recognized as ends in themselves. And in my lived world this mutuality of participation is a living experience. The more successfully we communicate the more freedom we enjoy in our self-expression. For a vast multitude of persons, this freedom of self-expression may be affected and hampered if they are taken as a means to somebody's end, thus divesting them of their freedom and dehumanizing them. This dimension of the problem, which

is beyond the scope of the present discussion, makes an interesting and worthwhile study.

One more point deserves special mention as it contains a philosophical insight of the highest order. In discussing modes of givenness and the nature of the given in a phenomenological way, Mohanty has noted another very significant truth. This he regards as a cardinal principle of all phenomenological philosophy. He calls it simply "the principle of phenomenological discontinuity". He urges the phenomenologist to see that there are "radical discontinuities amongst phenomena" among the phenomena. The temptation for system-building might appear very strong with some thinkers and the natural tendency would be to present a smooth system by filling in the gaps or ignoring the discontinuities among the given phenomena. This again is to be identified as a theoretical/contemplative attitude which does not strictly remain faithful to what is given and how it is given. Discontinuities are facts of life and they need not be denied for the sake of system-building.

## IV

Positivism in its ordinary sense means a study of what is given. But in the historical context of Western philosophy in which it has developed, it has principally appeared to be an outgrowth or a further logical development of empiricism. As a result it has had to grow up within the constraints of sense-empiricism, ultimately resulting in sense data philosophy or logical atomism. It is curious to note that in this further development "positivism" is paradoxically far removed from the "given" and has created its own world through abstraction, reductionism and constructionism. All these are superfluous if one attends to what is given in its usual mode of givenness. Of these modes the practical mode certainly has phenomenological priority inasmuch as it is inalienably connected with one's lifeworld and remains beyond reasonable doubt. Positivism of the Russellian type or, for that matter, of all the analytic philosophers is nowhere nearer to the actually given and has been justifiably designated as "lower positivism" by Mohanty as distinguished from the type of phenomenological description he has made of the given and its modes and has been appropriately named as "higher positivism". The basic truth which is forgotten in our zeal for logical consistency or homogeneous system-building is that it is not for the

philosopher to decide upon the nature of the given or the modes of givenness. Here one has no option other than attending to what is phenomenologically given, to how it is given, and describing it faithfully. Different layers and dimensions are explored in attending to the given phenomena, and the many perennial problems of philosophy, which have been attempted to be dissolved through Alternate Language Theory or some other means (e.g., as between physical objects and sense data and between the person and the subject), fade out into insignificance. So Mohanty's claim for presenting "higher positivism" is philosophically fully justified.

I have only some difficulties in Mohanty's explanation about the two different attitudes in which the *person* and the *subject* are given. He maintains that the former (person) is given "in living moral evaluating relationship with others, the latter through contemplation on the implication of the attitude of pure understanding."[16] He has classified his position regarding understanding and knowing and has expressed that "the more contemplative knowing is, the more does it approximate towards the ideal of knowing." Anyway Mohanty thinks that subjectivity is enjoyed in a contemplative mood. "The enjoyment of subjectivity is thus primarily egoistic, whereas the enjoyment of personality is primarily social."[17] Can subjectivity and personality be separated in this way? "I" in the living world is always with "others", and it become merely a contentless abstraction when it is treated as a pure ego. The Advaitin holds this I as pure consciousness, as the supreme Reality, but in the Advaita conception itself such a pure subjectless-objectless consciousness is beyond language and ordinary comprehension. It is very doubtful whether subjectivity can be enjoyed as a pure ego without being attached to anything. At least in phenomenological exploration of the pre-theoretical level this does not appear to be a possibility. Mohanty perhaps is making room for the transcendental existence of the ego, and this, of course, opens up a new dimension. But so far as the phenomenological exploration/description is concerned, just as in the case of the thing, so also in the case of the person, a pure subject enjoying its egoistic subjectivity in isolation from its others (the alter ego) is an abstraction. I should like to think that Martin Buber's insight of the "I" being always related to the "thou" (or an it) is nearer the fact of the given, and one's enjoyment of one's freedom and even subjectivity is hardly possible in a completely detached and isolated fashion without being conscious of one's *being with others*. The religionist finds the goal in his

relationships with the *Eternal Thou,* and an ordinary person his highest self expression and freedom in his relation of love to the *other.*

## NOTES

1. This essay is included in J.N. Mohanty's *Phenomenology and Ontology*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970).

2. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

3. *Ibid.*

4. This principle is named after the monk Occam who in the Middle Ages enunciated it.

5. Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1912).

6. L.S. Stebbing, "Logical Positivism and Analysis" in *Proceedings of the British Academy,* Vol. XIX, London.

7. M. Black, *Language and Philosophy*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949), Chapter 5.

8. J.N. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

10. K.D. Bhattacharyya, *Philosophy, Logic and Language,* (Calcutta: Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1965), p. 77.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

12. J.N. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

13. P.F. Strawson, *Individuals,* (London: Methuen, 1959).

14. J.N. Mohanty, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

# HUSSERL vs. DERRIDA

James M. Edie

It is striking (and somewhat embarrassing) to observe that in the now very large literature devoted to the works of Jacques Derrida very little critical attention has been paid to the strictly philosophical import of either his interpretations of other philosophers or to the ultimate content of his own philosophy. Certainly we have a great body of texts from students, admirers, and followers of Derrida, particularly in this country, who almost uncritically accept and then attempt to repeat in similar idioms the things that he has said or is interpreted as having meant. But serious philosophical comment is very sparse, whether from the side of analytical Anglo-American philosophy or from the side of phenomenology. Of course, we have the very penetrating analysis and criticism of his thought presented by John Searle, but Searle is almost unique among analytical philosophers for paying any attention to Derrida at all, unless, like Richard Rorty, they have also already given up philosophy for a sociology of communication.

The lack of critical interest in Derrida's thought on the part of Husserlian phenomenologists is more puzzling, in as much as one would expect a greater and more detailed interest in his criticisms of Husserl from them. But, here again, we find that the more disciplined and mature Husserl scholars seem to pass his work over in silence, while others who call themselves "continentalists" in a more general sense are likely simply to rest content with glorifying his supposed achievements. Therefore, the time would seem ripe for some kind of preliminary assessment of what his critique of Husserl actually comes down to and of how it might be answered.

Derrida's admirers and followers have the impression that his work began in a "counter-reading" of Husserl's text in order to squeeze out of it what Husserl was trying to hide or hedge in. Derrida himself is always, at least in his early works, very careful to emphasize his great respect for and indebtedness to



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 157–176.

Husserl and to acknowledge the greatness and originality of his thought, but there is no doubt that his intention was to seriously undermine certain key doctrines of Husserl's phenomenology and to erect in their place a method of deconstruction based on the notion of *différance*. If one were to read only Derrida's followers and admirers, who have produced the largest quantity of writing concerning his own prolific corpus now extant, one would certainly come away with the conclusion that he had thoroughly deconstructed not only the text of Husserl but his philosophical intentions as well and had revealed the innermost contradiction at the heart of Husserlian phenomenology, namely the secret adherence to a "bad" classical metaphysics of Being as presence. All of Derrida's principal concepts center around this one discovery and result in, if not the suppression, at least the *decentering* of the subject, or the displacement of consciousness.

## Consciousness/Subjectivity

Since consciousness is, for Husserl, the *Urtatsache* (the wonder of all wonders, the fundamental fact, the starting point, the origin), it appears that to attack the privilege which Husserl gives to consciousness is to strike at the heart of phenomenology. This is certainly a complex matter and Derrida, in his nuanced, brilliant, and strategically well organized discussion of Husserl, never suggests that Husserl is unaware that consciousness has its contrary, namely the absence of consciousness or nonconsciousness. Rather he attempts to *deconstruct* the sense which Husserl gave to consciousness and the subject. Derrida never completely renounces the subject since at least a "trace" of the subject always remains, and he responded to his critics in the *Société francaise de philosophie*, when he first read his essay *Différance* before them, that he had, unlike the Structuralists, never denied the existence of the subject.[1] But what exactly does it mean to say that in the last analysis only a *trace* of consciousness remains?

Though his deconstruction of this particular notion is one of his earlier deconstructions and, therefore, one of the more disciplined ones he has proffered, it does seem to get into almost immediate difficulty. He writes:

> What we would ultimately like to draw attention to is that the for-itself of self-presence (*für-sich*) -- traditionally determined in its dative dimension as phenomenological self-giving, whether reflexive or prereflexive -- arises in the role of supplement as primordial substitution, in the form of "in the place of" (*für etwas*), that is, as we have seen, in the very operation of significance in general. The *for-itself* would be *in-the-place-of-itself*: put *for-itself*, instead of itself. The strange structure of the supplement appears here: by delayed reaction, a possibility produces that to which it is said to be added on.[2]

Apart from its truth value, is this really sufficient to account for the centrality of our experience of being conscious of objects in the world and of ourselves? Or of the centrality of this consciousness for all of experience? The expression "for-itself" cannot be adequately explained by giving it a meaning derived from the dative case in the parts of speech which we learn in studying surface grammatical structures. The ancients, like Aristotle and the medievals (to be very brief), distinguished transitive and immanent actions by noting that "immanent" actions were those which "proceeded from the subject and remained in the subject as perfections of the subject", such as acts of cognition (as either first intentions, i.e., directed toward the having of objects in the world or second intentions, i.e., taking oneself or one's own conscious acts as objects) or acts of volition. The theory of intentionality developed on this basis by the high scholastics of the 13th and 14th centuries went into such subtleties and minute distinctions that contemporary philosophy has perhaps rightly forgotten about them, but the German idealists who invented the terminology to which Derrida himself alludes belonged essentially to the same "scholastic" tradition. When Kant distinguished the being of consciousness from being in itself (*an-sich-sein*) and named it with the more or less technical term of "being for itself" (*aus-sich-und-für-sich-sein*), we have essentially our contemporary phenomenological distinction between

being-for-itself and being-in-itself, or "experiencing being" as opposed to "experienced being".

Now there are many difficulties concerning the experiencing subject, concerning consciousness, concerning the transcendental ego, and many other things which Derrida rightly has qualms about. But certain distinctions, when they become as obvious and as imposing as this one, simply cannot be denied. It will not do to say things like it is neither active nor passive but of the middle voice, as if such grammatical terms could solve the question, since the locution "middle voice" can take on meaning -- by analytical definition -- only in terms of an opposition or a middle place between the active and the passive, just as to say that an element in a system appears and functions differently when isolated from that system than it does within the totality of the system or when it is placed in a different system altogether. These are truths which Derrida very well knows but in his rhetorical flights sometimes seems (or feigns) to forget or gloss over.

Phenomenology, of course, recognizes the many difficulties associated with its thesis of the centrality of consciousness in which consciousness is posited as the absolutely necessary condition for the possibility of any objectivity whatsoever, including the objectivity of the ego itself. For phenomenology, the subject is the zero-point of a system of coordinates, the necessary center of all experience, around which the world of objects is arraigned as in an indefinite horizon. But clearly there are difficulties, and phenomenology takes these up in a disciplined manner in order to answer them.

(1) As Derrida himself recognizes, when he says that "all phenomenology is a phenomenology of perception," there is the matter of the perspectival or situated character of consciousness. Consciousness always has a point of view which is *its* point of view on the world, and it is from this point of view only that objects can be perceived. Consciousness is inserted in the world both by perception and by embodiment. It is, in any case, always in a "place" and therefore can never experience anything from all sides at once, or from every possible point of view, or without emphasis, or exhaustively. Perception is always a *Vorwissen* as well as a *Mitwissen* in such wise that we always already know more about any particular object of perception than what is immediately and directly presented to us in any particular instance. Clearly in Husserl's phenomenology of perception room is left for the absences which are given together with what is primarily presented (much more is always appresented than

presented) and the embodiment of consciousness certainly confers the facticity and the positionality on consciousness which limit both its freedom and its absolute ability either to dominate any particular object in the world or to completely coincide with itself. All of this was well known to Husserl.

(2) There is also the theme of intersubjectivity, given primarily in our experience of other egos, of other beings who are experienced ("appresented") as at the same time experiencing the world and therefore as objectifying us as we objectify them, as other beings who "drain the world away from us", so to speak, and prevent the absolute dominion of my own individual experiencing self. Husserl, who sought a "middle way" between "realism" and "idealism", always faulted idealism with not adequately accounting for the real finitude of the plurality of subjects.

(3) And there is, above all, the problem of the temporality of consciousness which Husserl had always before him. We must remember that Husserl developed his phenomenological method not only from his own meticulous and continually renewed investigations but also, at least in part, under the stimulus of reading the *Principles of Psychology* of William James, to which he several times refers in the *Logical Investigations*. James calls the "now" of consciousness the "pulse" of consciousness. Husserl most usually employs the term "moment" (*Augenblick*). But in either case they did not mean a purely instantaneous, "punctual", instant in the ancient Aristotelian sense. James speaks of the *specious present*, and Husserl emphasizes the protentional and retentional character of the present moment of consciousness which in its presence to an object and/or to itself is always a duration (not unlike the *durée* of Bergson).

Derrida indeed recognizes Husserl's development of the *Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness* in which the structures of temporality are very carefully investigated and thematized. But he seems to believe that in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl had a more naive, even Aristotelian, notion of time as a "punctual" point in time similar to a geometrical point in space without dimensions, without duration, purely diaphanous. This does not seem to be borne out by the fact that Husserl's conception of consciousness in the *Logical Investigations* is that of an "anonymous operating intentionality", (that is a non-egological consciousness), a transcendental condition of experiencing not only objects in the world through time but also the ego itself (since, as he tells us

throughout the first edition of this work, he could find no "ego" in or behind consciousness).

This is no doubt a very difficult question, but it is certain that the manner in which Derrida poses it in chapter 5 of *Speech and Phenomena* is not the correct manner of proceeding if one wishes to remain fair to Husserl's intentions even in his earliest work.

## The 1st Investigation: Husserl's Theory of Signs

In his criticism of Husserl, which his disciples and admirers take to be quite general and quite definitive, Derrida in effect gives himself a very limited task. He limits himself almost exclusively to parts of the First Investigation, with a few references to relevant passages in some later works. He never considers Husserl's phenomenology as a whole, nor does he claim to.

In his treatment of the First Investigation, he is greatly helped by Husserl himself who continually and most honestly pointed out to his readers exactly where the crucial problems lay and what difficulties they might bring up. Husserl continually cautions us: "Problems of exceptional difficulty beset the phenomena which find their place under the headings 'to mean' (*Bedeuten*) and 'meaning' (*Bedeutung*)". Or again: "The figures of speech which here thrust themselves upon us...must be adopted with caution...."[3] By concentrating on just these difficulties, which we must concede are the most critical moments in the development of this Investigation, Derrida capitalizes on Husserl's own critical self awareness and the problems which Husserl felt would have to be worked over by generations of phenomenologists to come. He himself gave us more than one edition, as we know, of the *Logical Investiagtions*.[4]

So my first point here is that while we must recognize the brilliance, the ingenuity, the force, and the cohesion of Derrida's reading of the First Investigation, and must take serious account of the critical points that he brings up, it is not wrong to point out that he gave himself a somewhat easy assignment considering his ambitions and the momentous claims for the consequences of his success.

Derrida begins by pointing out that Husserl was an anti-metaphysical philosopher only to the extent that he wanted to excise the "degenerate" and

outmoded metaphysics of the past, which was based on unwarranted theoretical postulates that could in no way be brought back to present experience. He claims that by accepting the being of meaning and the being present of meaning as *ideality*, understood as the possible repetition of a productive act in the living present or in the self-presence of transcendental life, Husserl hides his own metaphysical and uncriticized presuppositions, in what he himself calls "first philosophy". Derrida writes:

> phenomenology seems to us tormented...contested from within, by its own descriptions of the movement of temporalization and of the constitution of intersubjectivity. At the heart of what ties together these two decisive moments of description we recognize an irreducible nonpresence as having a constituting value, and with it a nonlife, a nonpresence or nonself belonging of the living present, an ineradicable nonprimordiality.[5]

In his analysis of the First Investigation, Derrida does not mention, though undoubtedly he presumes, that Husserl, throughout his logical and linguistic investigations, is concerned only with what linguists call natural languages and not at all with the mathematized formal or artificial languages, which can be made up to take their place. Therefore, he begins with the totally unanalyzed linguistic and cognitive situation in which language is actually and practically used for a vast array of purposes among which is communication. But Husserl finds, as very many linguists found after him, that communication is not the only or even the logically primary function of language. There is a teleological purpose hidden in language (and Derrida will emphasize *writing* for reasons of his own, which have their own validity but should not be exaggerated to the extent they have been). This purpose is the linguistic one of enabling us -- in which the possiblity of writing certainly assists us as linguists well know -- to analyze what would otherwise be unanalyzed and, perhaps, unanalyzable thoughts. This ability of language to analyze the dumb thought of preverbal

experience, perceptual or otherwise, is certainly a function which is logically prior to the fact of more or less successful communication.[6]

In his discussion of our use of language, the central theme of Husserl's analysis is that of our ability to determine the sameness of meanings and to explain how it is that meanings -- as idealities -- are repeatable and therefore distinguishable from the "real" events of the individual psychic lives (of a speaker or hearer) of ordinary everyday life. The same sentence can be uttered on tone *e* by one person or on tone *d* by another, but will have the same intended sense in either case. Very great physical variations can take place in the utterances of the phonetic sounds themselves, and yet the same meaning be intended and repeated. Whenever we speak of the *same sign* we are not, therefore, referring to something real but to something "ideal". Meanings in themselves are not real entities; only our experience of ideal meanings can be said to be real, in the sense that our psychic experiences are ongoing, datable, historical events. The same object-of-thought can be had again and again by multiple consciousnesses but no two consciousnesses ever repeat their exact experiences twice. Every real being is subject to the law of the irreversible temporality of existence in such wise that consciousness at each moment of its development is in a new and different state of expectation, of position, of maturity, of existence. But it can always again and again intend the same meanings.

Furthermore, Husserl makes the crucial distinction (which Derrida also emphasizes and orchestrates) between signs which are words or expressions and signs which are only indications (*Anzeichen*). Unbeknownst to himself, Husserl contributes significantly to the foundation of contemporary phonology and linguistics with that distinction. A word in a natural language, or what Husserl calls an "expression" (*Ausdruck*), is a sign that has its meaning (*Bedeutung*) for so long as it can hold its place in the lexicon of a given natural language. No doubt the correlation between the physical aspect of the expression (the acoustic or written mark) and the non-physical aspect of sense-giving experience is only arbitrarily paired with the meaning. But in that historical language this word can have only that meaning and refers in this way to a selfsame and repeatable identity characterized by its ideality.

But there are many things in any given linguistic string, which is always composed of words (each with its ideal meaning) which convey something other and something more than what the words themselves strictly mean. This is

generally what Husserl refers to as "indication" since these matters are only indicated and not meant by the signs that convey them, there being no intrinsic or necessary connection between the sign and what it conveys in this instance. Suppose at this moment I am speaking and conveying to you, over and above the meaning of my words and sentences, certain psychic facts about myself, e.g., that I am elated or that I am depressed or that I am tired or that I would like to get on with it or that I have a low opinion of deconstructionism. Suppose also that I convey to you some physical information about myself, e.g., that I may have a deep or a squeaky voice or that I may have a cold or be otherwise physically in some distress or that I am speaking as though I had just received a promotion and a check from the Illinois State Lottery. In all these cases, the things indicated and conveyed by my acts of speaking would be conveyed through a purely associative connection with the words I am using and would have nothing to do with the expression of the meaning of the words that I am using. These Husserl calls "indicating signs" as opposed to "significant signs".

Now if I might be permitted a slight digression here, it would be only to state that the linguists that belonged to the Moscow School in the years between 1913 and 1917 were particularly well acquainted, as we know from the writings of Roman Jakobson, with Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, most particularly with his First Investigation on "Expression and Meaning". Long before they came to learn the same lesson independently from Saussure, they had already learned it from Husserl: namely, that the words of natural languages have a unique value and a unique status among signs in that the distinction between the *signified* and the *signifier*, though never erased, is constituted by an indissoluble link in such wise that a sign of this kind must always have, must always *mean*, its meaning. This is what distinguishes it from all other kinds of signs. Of course contemporary linguistics, a science only a little over fifty years old, owes many more lessons than this one to Husserl's inspiration. It was not only the First but also the Fourth Investigation which inspired many early linguists, just as the psychology of perception -- particularly Gestalt psychology -- received its main philosophical, logical and theoretical support from the Third Investigation entitled "On the Logic of Parts and Wholes"[7]. But this is not the place for an historical disquisition, even in outline form, of the contents of the First Investigation. We are able only to allude to them for the students of Husserl, who are already familiar with them, and to direct the attention of the others to them in this

manner. To say that an expressive sign *expresses* something can mean at least three things: (1) it may refer to the meaning-giving acts (with meaning-fulfilling acts if they are given), (2) or it may refer to the "contents" of these acts, i.e., their meanings, or (3) it may refer to the objectivity meant by the meaning and expressed by it, i.e., the object of reference in the real or fictive world.

Sometimes in reading what Jacques Derrida is setting up as a serious criticism we learn something very instructive about Husserl's real intentions. When discussing the contamination produced in communication by the expressing of a meaning and the indicative function of language that necessarily accompanies it, he notices that expression always indicates a content forever hidden from intuition, that is, the lived experience of another. Derrida writes:

> ...we have to ferret out the unshaken purity of expression in a language without communication, in a speech as monologue, in the completely muted voice of the "solitary mental life" (*im einsamen Seelenleben*). By a strange paradox, meaning would isolate the concentrated purity of its *ex-pressiveness* just at that moment when the relation to a certain *outside* is suspended. Only to a certain outside, because this reduction does not eliminate, but rather reveals, within pure expression a relation to an object, namely, the intending of an objective ideality, which stands face to face with the meaning-intention, the *Bedeutungsintention*. What we just called a paradox is in fact only the phenomenological project in its essence. Beyond the opposition of "idealism" and "realism", "subjectivism" and "objectivism", etc., transcendental phenomenological idealism answers to the necessity of describing the *ob*jectivity of the object and the *pre*sence of the present...from a standpoint which is not

> a simple inside but rather the intimate possibility of a relation to a beyond and to an outside in general.[8]

Of course we would have hoped for more sober language here, but as in many other places, Derrida gives us some insight into Husserl's mind -- to such an extent that, in reading his criticism and "refutations" of Husserl, I have been more than once reminded of a passage from St. Augustine's dialogue *On the Teacher*. There Augustine shows that it is not the subjective (indicative) intentions of the teacher, which are necessarily conveyed to the student, but the objective force of the argument he is expounding.

Augustine poses the case of a bright student reading the destructive criticisms of the atheistic Epicureans:

> For example, someone who is a follower of the Epicureans and thinks the soul is mortal sets forth the arguments for its immortality as expounded by wiser men. If one who is able to comprehend spiritual things hears him, he judges that the other is expressing the truth, whereas the speaker does not know whether his arguments are true or not, but thinks them utterly false. Is he, then to be considered as teaching what he does not know?[9]

## Difftérance

The notions of *Difftérance* and *Trace*, which Derrida develops, are in a sense both a generalization of the insights of Gestalt psychology (with which Gurwitsch and Merleau-Ponty have long since made us most familiar) and of the linguistics of Saussure. In the area of the phenomenology of perception, for instance, we never see objects or quasi-objects (such as sense-data) as purely positive bits of reality independent of the whole perceptual structure. No object as such is ever wholly

present, but only as containing its own differentiations from what is absent. If there is a presented object at all, it is only as an element in a system. What is present, Derrida says, is only "a function in a generalized referential structure." Ultimately he goes so far as to paradoxically attempt to subvert the entire philosophical understanding of perception by concluding that "there never was any perception."

> The perceptual situation is not *comprehended*, as Husserl would want it, by intuitions or presentations.... And contrary to what phenomenology -- which is always phenomenology of perception -- has tried to make us believe, contrary to what our desire cannot fail to be tempted into believing, the thing itself always escapes. Contrary to the assurance Husserl gives us ..."the look" cannot "abide."[10]

The oppositional structure of figure-ground or the organization of phonemic sounds and phonetic writing into patterns governed by laws of phonology, morphology, and perhaps syntax and giving us the rules for opposing one sign to another, allow Derrida to extend this oppositional structure to the entire intentional structure of consciousness in general. It is not only signs which are, in the words of Saussure, diacritical, negative, and oppositional, but also consciousness itself. The intentional object always can be identified, to the extent that it can be identified, only by what is *not* intended. If we, for instance, call an object "red", or "blue", or whatever color, it is only insofar as this particular quality is opposible to all other color adjectives which we would recognize in our natural languages as possibly taking its place. A color is just its opposition to black, yellow, purple and so on and nothing more.

But is all this correct? It seems highly doubtful that Derrida should be addressing this particular lesson to Husserl who took up the matter in great detail in his Third Investigation on the "The Logic of Parts and Wholes" and his phenomenology of perception in *Ideas* and elsewhere.[11]

Here I would like to make two points, relying on other recent commentators. The first is a remark of the most elementary common sense made by John Searle. Derrida has asked us to throw out "logocentrism" because of its dependence on "phonocentrism", and because of its consequence in leading to "phallocentrism". A lot more follows from this improbable folklore, as all who have read his texts and those of his imitators are well aware. But the danger of fighting logocentrism is that one may begin slipping into elementary mistakes in logic. Let me quote directly from Searle:

> The correct claim that the elements of the language only function as elements because of the differences they have from one another is converted into the false claim that the elements "consist of" (Culler)[12] or are "constituted on" (Derrida) the traces of these other elements. "There are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces." But the second thesis is not equivalent to the first, nor does it follow from it. From the fact that the elements function the way that they do because of their relations to other elements, it simply does not follow that "nothing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere ever simply present or absent. There are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces." ...The system of differences does nothing whatever to undermine the distinction between presence and absence; on the contrary the system of differences is precisely a system of presences and absences.[13]

The second brief remark will be made on the basis of a quotation from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and is applicable to many of the unwarranted generalizations to which Derrida is prone such as that: "*il n'y a pas*

*de hors texte*," "every reading is a mis-reading," "there never has been anything but writing," etc.

> "If it is possible for someone to make a false movement in some game, then it might be possible for everybody to make nothing but false moves in every game." Thus we are under a temptation to misunderstand the logic of our expressions here, to give an incorrect account of the use of our words. Orders are sometimes not obeyed. But what would it be like if no orders were ever obeyed? The concept 'order' would have lost its purpose.[14]

The same would be true if *every* reading were a mis-reading or if *every* perception were a mis-perceiving. We would be giving a very metaphysical sense to the word "misread". And if I say that after multiple partial viewings of a house that I have never *really* seen it at all, because it can never *be seen* as a whole, from every side at once, without perspectives, and is therefore in reality only my fiction, then what kind of metaphysical wonderland are we entering?[15]

## Metaphysics

It is necessary to concede that Husserl in his analyses of consciousness does sometimes use the language of ancient metaphysics, particularly at points where he is making the real distinction between body and soul. Husserl's use of the ancient word "soul", sometimes to designate consciousness, sometimes to designate the embodied consciousness, and sometimes to designate individual subjectivity, can be a metaphysical embarrassment to one who does not look beyond the terms he is using to what he actually means to say. The same is, no doubt, true also of his extensive use of the word "life" or *Leben*. Such terms describe the intentional orientation of human reality towards the world as a *Welterfahrendesleben* (world experiencing life). The elements in Husserl's

terminology, which delighted a lifeworld theorist like John Wild, horrify the Derridians. But let us remember that the ancients had a very hard time making the distinction between *anima* (the animating principle) and *animus* (consciousness) and sometimes conflated the notions. Husserl has no trouble making the distinction and does not conflate the meanings, though he sometimes uses a metaphysical terminology that a more vigilant phenomenologist might later on discard. Nevertheless we must ask what Derrida's "metaphysical closure" or Heidegger's "destruction of metaphysics" or even the not yet completed "deconstruction of metaphysics" proposed by Derrida actually amounts to. Derrida does not always say that this has already been accomplished, and we know that he goes on teaching the texts of classical philosophy like everybody else, while waiting for the final closure to take place.

> For the present and for sometime to come, the movement of that schema will only be capable of working over the language of metaphysics from within, from a certain sphere of problems inside that language. No doubt this work has always already begun. We shall have to grasp what happens inside language when the closure of metaphysics is announced.[16]

In attempting to overcome metaphysics, he happily announces himself to be the disciple of Heidegger, though if we read the fine print we are not fully reassured about Heidegger. He says, for instance, that Heidegger has better than anyone else escaped metaphysics in certain texts. But he then goes on to say:[17] "This does not mean, of course, that one [Heidegger] often escapes them afterwards." And in another place he writes:[18] "Perhaps it is already apparent that, while we appeal to Heideggerian motifs in decisive places, we would especially like to raise the question whether...Heidegger's thought does not sometimes raise the same questions as the metaphysics of presence." All this seems to come down to Derrida congratulating Heidegger by saying in effect: "The whole world is entrapped in metaphysics except for thee and me, but now that I think about it I am not sure about thee!"

It seems to me that we must, in conclusion, ask what Derrida's own rejection of the "bad", "classical" metaphysics of Husserl and all previous logocentric philosophy really amounts to. What is the conclusion? What is the net gain of his "closure"? What, in short, is the result?

When we look at the highly imaginative and metaphorical vocabulary he uses to express his deconstructions of metaphysics, we begin to wonder how he could have erected one of the main pillars of his attack on Husserl's phenomenology, on Husserl's supposed inability to see where his own metaphorical vocabulary was misleading him. Moreover, we begin to wonder how the whole of his "White Mythology", or the history of Western metaphysics, seems to be based, as does Heidegger's at times, on the fact that Western metaphysics is built up on a metaphorical base which does not bear critical scrutiny. What are we to make of his own writings? He tells us that words:

> are not *atoms*, but points of economic condensation, necessary stations along the way for a large number of marks, for somewhat more effervescent crucibles. Then their effects not only turn back on themselves through a sort of closed self-excitation, they spread themselves in a chain over the theoretical and practical whole of a text, each time in a different way.[19]

In his paper on *différance*, he insists that *différance* "is neither a *word* nor a *concept*," though on the very next page he refers to "what I will provisionally call the word or concept of *différance* in its new spelling." Of course, it *really* is a word and it is a concept, perhaps a somewhat vague concept considering the manner in which it has been and is being used. But it is sufficiently distinct to be distinguished from others, and Derrida certainly knows enough about the development of natural languages to recognize that he has no control over the creation and use of words and concepts even if he was their first historical source.

In discussing Derrida's attitude towards metaphysics and its history, or even in uncovering his own metaphysics (which seems to be a highly baroque form

of absolute idealism), we must always recall that he (and we) are always permitted to use the language and the arguments even of the "old" metaphysics so long as we do so "under erasure" (*sous rature*). Heidegger invented the style of writing that would cross out words, particularly for *being*, in his printed texts, so that he could continue to use the same old words while claiming to be saying something that had never been said before and that nobody had ever understood before and that perhaps nobody else could ever completely understand. Derrida has made it an artform. But we must still ask ourselves commonsensically from time to time what it means to use a vocabulary "under erasure", and what it all eventually comes to.

I am afraid that all this is not very reassuring to any philosopher, most of whom have about the same reaction to Derrida's writings as Aristotle did to those of Heraclitus. But it is, no doubt, too early to draw up a final balance sheet on just what Derrida's contribution to the history of metaphysics, whether destructive or constructive, may be. I will, therefore, conclude with two points made by two of the most perceptive critics among the younger generation of commentators on Derrida. Admittedly I will be condensing their thought far beyond what they would tolerate and I may be accentuating aspects of it they did not wish to emphasize.

The first is taken from Irene Harvey's magisterial work, *Derrida and the Economy of Différance* in which her last chapter is devoted to outlining the "structure" of *différance*, a concept which is not supposed to be a concept and is not supposed to have any structure. She shows that, contrary to Derrida's express intentions, the concept of différance does have structure:

> In short différance itself, as the nonrepresentable principle of representation, itself repeats. It (a) allows for the possibility of repetition and in turn (b) itself repeats as a form in all its various effects.[20]

This is indeed a grand admission. Derrida has reintroduced ideality, the notion of sameness, of teleology, of repeatability, in short, of the Kantian Idea, the very point on which (according to the early Derrida) Husserl had based his

metaphysics of being as presence. Yet he has done so in a very concealing manner and with an opaque shield of verbiage in front of it.

My second and final point comes from another younger commentator who has been trying for years to come to grips with the strengths and the weaknesses of Derrida's thought and its presuppositions. David Wood, in his latest essay on Derrida, comes to the conclusion that there is ultimately behind Derrida's reasoning, when it can be rigorously followed point by point, a formal transcendental dimension which leaves the door to philosophy (and even metaphysics) open. For, as Wood concludes, "There is no other place to go."[21]

## NOTES

1. In "The Original Discussion of *Différance* (1968)", *Derrida and Différance*, eds. David Wood and Robert Bernasconi, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988), p. 92.

2. Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, tr. David B. Allison, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 88-89.

3. As cited by Derrida, *ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

4. There are six Investigations, but there is no reason why there might not be many more, just as there are three volumes of *Ideas*, which is also an incomplete project, just as there are five (or six) *Cartesian Meditations*, and so on. Contrary to Derrida's usual language very few of Husserl's books are written with "authority", or fully finished as points of "origin" for future generations. One of the most beautiful exceptions is, of course, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* which he wrote in a state of great exaltation in the period of a few months time (while the others took months and years of laborious effort) and which, unlike most of his other investigations, does have a beginning, a middle and an end, though we know from his later *Experience and Judgement* that he considered even this important work to still need further revision and critical reworking.

5. Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, p. 6.

6. Derrida makes much of his "strategy" to replace the phoneme by the grapheme as the most important and primary element of language and to elevate writing above speaking. As he says "there never has been anything but writing, there have never been anything but supplements, substitutive significations which could only come forth in a chain of differential references, the 'real' supervening, and being added only while taking on meaning from a trace and from an invocation of the supplement, etc." To which he has added the oft-repeated slogan: "*il n'y a pas de hors texte*." [Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, tr. Gayatri Spivak, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1974), pp. 158-159]. Since it is a part of his "strategy" or one of his "strategies" to privilege the side which has

always been the underdog in Western philosophy, and since he thinks Western philosophers have given the primacy to speaking over writing, he greatly emphasizes the necessity and importance of the grapheme as having always already been potentially there in language, even prior to speech. This is the primordial or archi-writing which is present even before writing and which rules even speaking. It seems to me that, having decided on this "strategy", Derrida does not do much with it. He greatly emphasizes the fact, for instance, that in his own heavily announced neologism "différance" there is *no* distinction between the sounding of this word in speech whether it is written with an *a* or with an *e*, but surely this is true only for French phonology since, in English, there would be a strong tendency to pronounce "difference" (with an *e*) differently from "différance" (with an *a*). Much more importantly, we could understand his preoccupation with writing if it were used to make the linguistic point that unless and until a phonological system and other systems of language can be written down and analyzed in that way their preunderstood laws and structures (just like kinship structures!) go unobserved. But Derrida is not interested in scientific linguistics.

7. See Elmar Holenstein, *Roman Jakobson's Approach to Language*, tr. Catherine Schelbert, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), Introduction.

8. Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, p. 22.

9. St. Augustine, *On The Teacher*, 13, 41.

10. Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, p. 104.

11. It seems to me worth noting that when Derrida first read his paper on *Différance* to the Société francaise de Philosophie even the Marxist critic, Lucien Goldman took him to task for his feigned naivité in attacking phenomenology on this point: "Derrida knows as well as anyone that since the psychology of form, innumerable experiments have shown that, even for the most elementary forms of perception, one does not perceive elements but relations and structures." From *Derrida and Différance, op. cit.*, p. 92.

12. Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

13. John Searle, "The Word Turned Upside Down", *New York Review of Books*, October 27, 1983, pp. 74 ff.

14. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, (New York: Macmillan, 1958), ¶ 345, p. 110e.

15. I am indebted for these remarks to my discussions with Professor Carl A. Rapp and also to his remarkable paper on literary criticism entitled "The Metaphysics of Deconstruction".

16. Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, pp. 51-52.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

19. Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, as quoted in J. Hillis Miller, "Stevens' Rock and Criticism as Cure", in *Aesthetics Today*, ed. Morris Philipson and Paul Gudel, New York, 1980, p. 521. I am also indebted to Professor Carl A. Rapp for his reference to this discussion.

20. Irene E. Harvey, *Derrida and the Economy of Différance*, (Bloomington: The Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 203. The discussion of the logical and metaphysical importance of Husserl's concept of "teleology" goes far beyond the scope of this essay. A much better and a much more sure guide through this literature than Derrida would be André de Muralt, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, tr. Garry L. Breckon, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press), 1974.

21. David Wood, *"Différance* and the Problem of Strategy", *Derrida and Différance, op. cit.*, p. 69.

# MIND AND MEMORY

**Edward S. Casey**

In this essay, presented in honor of Professor J.N. Mohanty, I undertake to do what I did not accomplish in a recently published book on the subject of memory. In the book, I attempted to disentangle memory from mind through a critique of mentalistic models of memory -- models which limit remembering to acts of recollecting experiences in imagistic (visual or quasi-visual) "scenes". But there is another story to tell, one in which the positive, productive links between mind and memory figure their complex intertwining, indeed their indispensability to each other.

To begin with, we must consider classical Western views of memory as a mere repetition and retention of perceptions. In Aristotle and in Hume, for example, we find the idea that memory consists in the preservation and re-ordering of determinate sensations. A twofold presumption of simplicity is at work in this idea. First, there is a belief in the ultimate simplicity of sensations as the originating points -- the "atoms" -- of memory. Second, there is a parallel commitment to the simplicity of the working of memory itself. One critical kind of memory is posited -- i.e., recollection or "secondary memory" -- and this single sort of memory is presumed to operate in terms of a unique process: e.g., "copying" impressions (as Hume preferred to call it) or "rehearsal" in the contemporary language of cognitive psychology. This leaves any significant variation in memory to be a matter of mere re-ordering of what has been copied or rehearsed.

This dual simplicity thesis is itself an instance of what has come to be called "the metaphysics of presence". For such metaphysics, the aim is to achieve determinacy and unity at almost any philosophical price -- including the price of being inattentive to the welter of human experience. Descriptive sensitivity is sacrificed for the sake of ideals of pure presence. Leading examples of such ideals are precisely such things as atoms of sensations and their copies in memory.



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 177–194.

Another leading instance of the metaphysics of presence is the notion of pure Mind as this was proposed by Descartes. In the Cartesian view, mind is one simple substance -- *res cogitans* -- and as a consequence memory becomes one of its mere modes. But what if matters are otherwise? What if memory is no mere mode of mind but a power in its own right? And what if memory and mind, far from being reducible to a self-contained substance along with one of its determinate modes, both reveal an intrinsic complexity of character and of operation?

One thing is certain: only an effort to be descriptively adequate to human experience will show us the way to the answers to such questions. This way I take to be the way of phenomenology. It is the way which J.N. Mohanty has blazed so brilliantly in his distinguished career as a phenomenologist in the venerable tradition of Husserl.

## I

Any attempt to undertake a phenomenology of remembering is, by its nature, an exercise in the philosophy of mind. This is not merely because remembering is one act of mind among others -- which it certainly is. More than just a mode of minding, however, remembering *is* minding; it is mind in its most massively moving form, in its most complete and comprehensive action. Mind and memory, then, are not two separate things -- much less two separate topics as a recent study by Norman Malcolm suggests.[1] They are interfused to the point of indistinguishability, becoming one with one another. To investigate remembering is to pursue mind as well, and the reverse is also true.

It is hardly accidental, therefore, that the oldest words for "mind" in English and other languages of Germanic origin mean memory: *gemynd* in Old English, *gamund* in Old Teutonic, *gimunt* in Old High German, and *gamund-s* in Gothic.[2] *Gemynd* becomes *mynd* (and *minde*) in Middle English, which drops the "*ge-*" prefix here as in other cases. The only trace of this crucial prefix in a living language is found in *Gedächtnis*, one of the modern German words for memory. "*Ge-*" is crucial since it adds to the Old English root *mynde* (and hence to the Indogermanic stem *men-*) the idea of being "with" or "together". As such, the *ge-* is an equivalent of the Latin *com-* and of the modern English *co-* and *con-*, whose meanings include "joint", "natural", "sharing", "to the same degree",

being a "fellow" or "partner", and "operating together or reciprocally".[3] Mind is memory -- is indispensably "ge-mind" -- precisely to the extent that its activity consists in making possible, and realizing, an essential co-action at every level of the psyche. Bringing experience into mind and minding it there is a matter of con-tinuing co-education, we might say. Mind alone is capable of such constant co-ordination of experiences -- so com-plex throughout as to beggar description, let alone explanation. Only something able to re-member the bewildering disarray of incoming experience -- to simply com-memorate it within -- is equal to the task.

Mind, then, is a matter of memory. Of the twenty-one main meanings of "mind" in modern English, six refer explicitly to memory and nine do so implicity via such intermediaries as thought, purpose, and intention. The six meanings are:[4]

1. *the faculty of memory*: as in Chaucer's statement: "she seyde she was so mazed in the see that she forgat her mynde by him trouthe;"

2. *to put (a person) in mind*: to remind, as in Swift: "Stella used to do such tricks formerly; he puts one in mind of her;"

3. *that which is remembered of* (a person or thing): the memory or account of. Notice that the phrase "of good mind" is equivalent to "of happy memory;"

4. *the action (or an act) of commemorating*: something which serves to commemorate; a commemoration, a memorial, as in Wycliff (1388): "Do ye this thing in mynde of me"; falling under this heading is the practice of "mind-days", the days on which a person's death is commemorated, as well as the closely correlated notions of "mind-places" and "mind-tokens;"

5. *mention, record*: especially in the phrase "to make mind", as in Piers Plowman (1377): "of such synful shrewes the sauter maketh mynde;"

6. *the state of being remembered*: remembrance, recollection; chiefly in phrases such as "to be in mind" (i.e., kept in memory), "to have, bear, keep in mind", "to bring or call to mind" (as in the words of Burn's *Auld Lang Syne*: "Should

auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind"), "to go or pass out of mind" (i.e., to forget), "time out of mind" (i.e., from time immemorial).

We may take this proliferation of meanings as a *caveat*: even if mind is above all and first of all memory, it is so in no single, simple way. It is not a question of any strict identity between the two, as the evolution of *mynd* from *gemynd* already warns us and as the presence of other modern definitions of mind as representational in various respects also indicates. Rather than psychical self-identity, it is a matter of what I like to call the multiplicity of the mental.[5] Mind is memorial in many manners and not in one, or even in two or three, only. There is no more one such thing as mind than there is one such thing as remembering in and with it. We are "maendfalle, or of good meande, *memorious*"[6] in multiple ways.

Just for this reason we must return to the early word *gemynde*, in which mind and memory meet in common origin: an origin, however, which is itself already multiple. As the *ge-* signifies, it is already a holding together of what is diverse and manifold from the very start. No single thing, but many things, are held together in *gemynde* -- in *mind-memory* or we may hazard to translate this polysemous patronym. The common origin is collective. Just as remembering is always already enacted in many modes -- as I have been striving to show for the past decade[7] -- so minding is always already multiplex. It is remembering certainly, but it is also emoting, willing, thinking, and many other things. "Mind", which after Descartes we take to be a single kind of entity or process, is anything but single-minded.

Mind is in fact so many things -- is enacted in so many ways, each of which tempts us to give it a separate status -- that even its provisional semantic unity is threatened. How can this one word come to mean not only memory but much else besides, e.g., "desire", "wish", "purpose", "thought", "intention", "mental or physical being or faculty"? How can we still speak of it as *a* being or faculty-- as *an* anything? How can the center, if there is a center, hold in the face of such de-centering, such a "semantic mirage"[8] (as Derrida might call it)?

I suggest that the holding action is affected by *memory*. It is precisely memory which holds mind together, even and especially a mind that consists in more than remembering understood in the strict sense of recollection or recall (this sense has traditionally been regarded as central). But what then is remembering in a

non-strict, non-central sense which nevertheless captures its annealing power, its congealing capacity? What enables such remembering to reconnect mind and thus to consolidate it in the face of its own promiscuity? The remembering now in question has for its essential activity collecting or drawing together. The *ge-* of *gemynde* points in this same direction, since it signifies basic action[9] of *gathering*. To gather is to bring together into an association, collectivity, or common grasp -- however tightly or loosely knit it may be.[10] Remembering is, accordingly, *a bringing together by bringing back*: back precisely to mind. It is in this way a *re-minding*, since "re-" means "back" as well as "again". Mind is put back together out of its self-proliferation by being regathered in memory.

Among contemporary philosophers, it has been Heidegger who has grasped this aspect of memory with the greatest acumen. In *What is Called Thinking?*, he proclaims:

> It is plain that the word ['memory'] means something else than merely the psychological demonstrable agility to retain a mental representation, an idea, or something which is past. Memory [*Gedächtnis*] -- from Latin *memor*, mindful -- has in mind something that is in the mind, thought. But when it is the name of the Mother of the muses [i.e., *Mnemosyne*], "memory" does not mean just any thought of anything that can be thought.... *Memory is the recollection, thinking back.*[11]

"*Gedächtnis ist die Versammlung des Andenkens.*" Memory assembles or gathers together, much as Mnemosyne collects together the nine muses to which she gave birth on successive nights. Memory is *re-collection*, a collecting together again of the fragments of the past which otherwise would be dispersed in forgetfulness. But what kind of collecting is this? In what does such rememorative gathering consist?

The gathering action of memory is twofold: gathering-in and in-gathering. Let us look at each of these more closely, since taken together as genuine co-actions they constitute the re-minding of mind itself.

(a) *Gathering-in.* By this I mean the way in which remembering draws into its alchemical activity the *detritus* of every kind of mentation, whether it be imagining or thinking, feeling or perceiving. The remnants of all one's experiences find their way, however circuitously, into the alembic of remembering. Where else do they -- could they -- go? The receptacle of remembering takes in all comers. The eclipse of an experience is arrested only by its reception and transmutation in this mnemonic vessel, at once the preserver and the transformer of all that happens in mind. Or more exactly, what has vanished from conscious mind, dispersed by interference or oblivion, or simply lost in all the on-rush of new experience, is gathered-in, restored as integral, by the re-collective power of memory.

(b) *In-gathering.* But remembering is more than a matter of making whole again in some synthetic *unio mentalis*. If it is an integration from without, it is also an intensification from within. In alchemical language, it is a matter of distillation and fermentation within the vessel; in the language of the body, it is a matter of *heart*, as is attested again by Heidegger:

> The originary word '*thanc*' [Old English for "thought"] is imbued with the original nature of memory: the gathering of the constant intention [*Meinen*] of everything that the heart [*das Gemüt*] holds in present being [*anwesen läßt*].[12]

Now the intention in question is "the inclination with which [the] meditation of the heart turns toward all that is in being;"[13] and this meditation in turn is conceived by Heidegger as a form of concentration:

> 'Memory' initially did not at all mean the power to recall. The word designates the whole disposition [*Gemüt*] in the sense of a steadfast intimate concentration upon the

> things that essentially speak to us in every thoughtful mediation. Originally, 'memory' means...a constant concentrated abiding with something.[14]

The word here translated as "concentration" is *Versammlung*,[15] the same word which elsewhere in *Was heißt Denken?* is translated as "gathering". A still more apt translation might be "in-gathering". A "steadfast intimate concentration upon things", a "constant concentrated abiding with something", the "in-most meditation of the heart": each of these phrases points to the in-gathering effected in remembering, a process not only of taking in (of "taking to heart") but of *making-in*. This making-in is a making inward, a making of heart, of psychical interiority; it is a making of mind, a making made by memory itself -- indeed a mind-making which is nothing other than memory itself in its full sweep.

It is important to stress that each of the two basic co-actions is essential to the other. Without gathering-in, there would be no influx of elements from experience -- no "input", no learning, and consequently no display or show, of items assimilated from our being-in-the-world. In short, there would be nothing to start with or build from.[16] Without in-gathering, on the other hand, this initial act of collecting would remain without further effect and in particular without that transmutation into the invisibility of inwardness of which Rilke speaks.[17] It possesses a well-formed Gestalt, but it would fail to become more deeply suffused with feeling and thought, fantasy and imagination. In brief, it would lack heart: *das Gemüt*, with all that this implies of inner disposition, sensitiveness, and sensuousness. A psychical show without heart is a sham; and if the show is to go on in mind, it must go on by an activity of in-folding (in T.S. Eliot's apposite term).[18]

*Gathering-in and in-gathering at once, memory makes mind: makes it what it is and can be by virtue of what it has been.*

## II

Thinking is certainly a main manner of minding, so much so that it is often taken for minding as a whole. In its "more restricted application", says the *O.E.D.*, mind is "the cognitive or intellectual powers as distinguished from the will and

emotions." Thus George Moore can lament that "unfortunately the word mind has been almost universally employed to signify both that which thinks and the phenomena of thinking."[19] As such, mind becomes contrasted with heart, and is held to be "cold and calculating" in comparison with the latter. However wrong such a view may be -- there are, after all, passions proper to intellection, as both Collingwood and Spinoza have emphasized -- it is to be taken seriously because it conceals a view which is deeply correct. What do I have in mind -- or rather in *gemynd* -- here?

The primary, or at least a primary, purpose of mind can be said to be ready to be thinking if thinking is richly enough understood. Thinking is certainly more than calculation and deliberation, and it is even more than intellection (where this latter means dwelling on ideas for their own sake). Thinking in its essential and largest sense is being-in-mind of concepts. Concepts, in contrast with ideas, are not archetypes or exemplars of finite things; they are modes of grasping things and understanding them in their "notion" (in Hegel's term): means of comprehension in short. But to make thinking conceptual, even in this enlarged sense -- is this not still to consider minding as something disembodied, rarified, still a mode of intellection?

Notice, however, the terms of description: con-cept, com-prehension, and (as Heidegger might add) con-centration. The *com*-and *con-* of these terms connote, as we know, the quite concrete working of remembering in its gathering capacities. This is hardly surprising. Unless memory held concepts together in mind, we could not think at all. What Husserl calls "still retaining-in-grasp" (*noch im Griff behalten*) and Heidegger simply "keeping" (*Verwährnis*) both refer to this basic ingrediency of remembering *qua* retentional in all thinking.[20] It is this retentionality -- which is not to be confused with merely additive retentiveness -- which allows thinking to be genuinely comprehensive and conceptual, indeed both at once:

(a) *com-prehensive*: that is, prehending *together*, in one mind, a diversity of items whose colligation at a given point in time amounts to increased understanding not because of their mere juxtaposition in memory but because they are co-remembered in reference and relevance to one another. The intercalation of items in and through the remembering motions of memory is what gives rise to an

authentically comprehensive grasp of them in their inter-involvement with one another;

(b) *con-ceptual*: but more still than such subtle surveying is at stake in thinking. The gathering gaze of retentional remembering must elevate itself-- must *se relèver* as Derrida, translating Hegel's *sich aufheben*, would explicitly put it -- to the level of conceptuality: which is to say, to a level of pervasive generality. Remembering is, once more indispensable to this enterprise, for it allows us to generalize over more than present experience (that of the display before one's mind *now*) by reaching into the remote regions of past experience as well. The rememorative gathering-together of past and present experience -- e.g., in inductive generalization, where the role of memory is no less crucial for being so conspicuously overlooked in most philosophical treatments of the subject -- makes conceptuality *qua* generality possible: indeed it brings it about itself by its implicit or explicit com-paring and con-trasting action. The result is more complete, a more adequate and thorough, understanding of both past and present experiences, each illuminating the other at the newly attained level of conceptual generality.

As a consequence of this two-fold action of thinking, it is not at all surprising to find that three of the basic meanings of "mind" which distinctly involve thought all presuppose the operation of remembering:

1. "The action or state of thinking *about* something; the thought of (an object)." Chiefly in phrases such as "to take mind to", "to have mind of", "to put in mind". We cannot think about or think of something unless we already, at some level, have that something *in* the mind to be pondered thus; and having it already in the mind is precisely the effect of memory in its properly retentive capacity, which allows us to hold things in mind (often quite unconsciously) for the sake of future revival: as the phrase "to have mind of" explicitly indicates.

2. "That which a person thinks about any subject or question; one's view, judgment or opinion." We could not hold an opinion or take a view unless we have previously in memory both the information or experience on which it is based and the congealing or transformation of this latter *into* the opinion or view.

Moreover, the very tendency of a given view, judgment, or opinion to *persist* is due to remembering in its all keeping or preservative role, which is the very basis of the sedimenting or settling of so many of these things in the natural course of affairs.

3. A series of phrases, all closely related to #2 above: (a) to speak one's mind (out); (b) to be of a mind (to do something); (c) in my mind; (d) to be of one, or a, mind; with one mind (i.e., unanimously); (e) to be of two minds (about); (f) against the mind of.

Remembering is again essential here. How, without it, could we speak our mind out, a mind or view we must already have and be able to recollect? Similarly, there is no way of being "of a mind" -- of one mind or even of two minds -- to do something except insofar as we can bring *back* to mind via recollection that which we have a mind of or about?

Remembering as the capacitor of comprehending and conceiving is at work in thinking throughout. As Alexander Pope said, "remembrance and reflection how allied!"[21] One could not, for example, hold (or more exactly, hold *to*) an opinion or view in the first place if this was not already conceptual in character, that is, such as to hold generally over a number of different cases (at least in one's own assessment of it). The conceptuality lends clarity and fixity as well to what might be otherwise a mere passing thought. Further, any view that one does have or hold tends to be comprehensive -- as comprehensive as present circumstances permit. It brings together parts of one's experience into a single synthetic whole, and this is due very much to the efforts of memory in its colligating capacity.

In sum, in the context of thought, remembering's gathering occurs in the bivalent form of conception and comprehension, which leave their memorially based marks on all of the significant processes and products of human thinking. We should not therefore say that remembering merely arises *in the service of* thought, since thinking is always already, in its very infrastructure, rememorative through and through: *there is no thinking that is not memorial.* Not only the fine arts but the art of thinking itself is an offspring of the Greek goddess Mnemosyne.[22]

Mind occurs, and occurs perhaps most prominently, as thinking. But thinking takes place only as and in remembering, which is responsible for its very constitution as a thinking which is more and other than calculation or intellection. It is a genuinely re-collective thinking that brings together, in comprehension and in conceptuality, what is worth thinking about -- what is, in short, *worth bearing in mind.* As with all con-structive remembering, the bearing in mind of re-collective thought is itself a making of mind. Mind is made by a thinking that remembers itself: re-members its own course and contents.

## III

But mind is also more and other than a thinking thing. It is also an agency of desire. The Old Norse word *mun-r* means indifferently mind, desire, or love; *minna* in Old Swedish connotes love; and *min* in Old English means equally mind, purpose, or intention. At least six different meanings of the English word "mind" have to do with desire or wish, purpose or intention. These can be seen from the following representative list:[23]

(a) "to know one's own mind" (where intention and thought merge with each other);

(b) "to make up one's mind;"

(c) "to be of many minds;"

(d) "to be of a mind" (i.e., to do X or Y);

(e) "to change one's mind;"

(f) "to have a mind" (again, to do X or Y);

(g) "to give one's mind to."

"Minding for" originally meant wishing for, desiring, while "to bear in mind" signified having a specific sentiment: "to bear good mind to" is to be well

disposed towards. In fact, in this sector of its semantic field "mind" comes very close to meaning "heart" in that broad sense of *Gemüt* alluded to earlier, a sense that includes everything from given affects and emotions to character and moral disposition.

For purposes of simplification, we may bifurcate this field into two distinct regions: intention and feeling. Desire subtends both, though differently in each case; it is a *motive* in relation to intention (I intend to do something because or insofar as I desire the result of doing it or perhaps simply the doing itself) whereas it is an intrinsic component of feeling (I feel myself desiring X or Y; the desire moves me without providing a justification or reason for my feeling, as would a motive). In whichever of these two basic ways in which it desires, mind continues to call upon remembering as indispensable to its enterprise.

(a) *Intention*. Intending to do something because of desiring it is an aiming at it in the light of previous experience. Whether this experience has led to attraction, aversion, or even indifference, it is its memory in the present which is the crucially operative factor. I need not, of course, recall the previous experience consciously or explicitly for it to be powerfully ingredient in my current desiring. "Memory", as Plato says in the *Philebus*, "*leads us on* to the objects of our desire,"[24] and it does this leading in many ways -- including the bringing in of analogous experiences whose ostensible similarity to the present experience is not at all evident. As Plato emphasizes, it is matter of acting in the present *through* (*dia*) memory and not necessarily *by* an act of recollection as such.[25] This is especially so in the case of intending something, when we may not be at all aware of the memorial component of the experience or even of *any* past antecedents. Yet if the hand of memory here exercises a light touch, it is no less important for being so discrete. We tend to intend only that which we remember as being intendable and worth intending.

(b) *Feeling*. In the case of feeling, the mediating role of memory is even more crucial, especially when we consider that many feelings *look forward* to satisfaction only by *looking back* in memory at previous satisfactions of the same, or of a similar kind. Plato is insistent on this in his consideration of the "intermediate state" into which feeling often puts human beings. This is a state, he says,

> [w]hen we feel distress by reason of what we are experiencing, and at the same time remember the pleasures whose occurrence would relieve our distress, though the replenishment is still in the future...we are in an intermediate state...*when, hoping for replenishment, we feel pleasure through what we remember*, though nevertheless we feel pain simultaneously because of the emptying process going on at the times in question.[26]

The mixing of memory with desire in feeling -- in this instance, the feeling of pleasure arising from an anticipated future satisfaction -- occurs once more through memory.[27] More than a mediator however, and perhaps more even than a motivator, memory can mix with desire so fully and subtly as to become the very substance of feeling. When Freud speaks of a "basic wish", a desire whose conscious affective tone is precisely a feeling, he underlines the way such a wish aims at establishing a state of fulfillment that is "perceptually identical" with an original experience (prototypically in infancy) of satisfying the same wish. The identity here aimed at is not only made possible by memory -- e.g, by "memory-traces" in Freud's own favored explanation of how the identity arises[28] -- but, still more radically, is *constituted by it*. As an identity between past and future pleasures, it is both established by and made up of memories. The perceptual identity of desires is perforce a memorial identity. On this view, I cannot identify or project a future feeling of pleasure *as* a feeling of pleasure (even as an imagined one) unless I can consider it as identical in some significant sense with past feelings of the same pleasure; and it is memory that is responsible for the identity and the sameness. Indeed, the past and future of *any* experience have no way of conjoining in our minds except *through memory*, and what Freud says of dreams is equally true of intentions and feelings as well:

> dreams are derived from the past [and thus from memory] in every sense. Nevertheless the ancient belief that dreams foretell the future is not wholly devoid of truth. By

> picturing our wishes as fulfilled, dreams are after all leading us into the future. But *this future*, which the dreamer pictures as the present, *has been moulded by his indestructible wish into a perfect likeness of the past.*[29]

*Perfect* likeness involves identity of content and structure; it is created by bringing together otherwise disparate terms and allowing them to fuse with one another. In human mentation, the bringing together and the fusing are effected by the richly ramifying action of memory.

## IV

Creating an identity of past and future desires in the fashion just described is therefore as much the work of a fully re-collective remembering -- which in-gathers as it gathers-in -- as the constituting of a thinking that is conceptual and comprehensive is an effect of the same work. Desire and thought meet in memory; they do their mixing and merging there; memory is in this manner the main medium for participating and sharing in mind, whether as thinking or as desiring. Yet more than mediation is involved; memory is not only a point of connection between thoughts and feelings diversely situated in time, though it certainly plays a bridging role of this sort too; it is also a matrix of and for mentation of every kind, a receptacle within which mind can realize itself in its polymorphic profusion -- that is to say, in which it can come into its own as mind. Memory provides an ongoing meeting-place as well as singular substance to mind; it offers position as well as content to it. If we said earlier that mind is a matter of memory, we can now say that memory in turn is the matter of mind.

Mind, we must constantly remind ourselves, is hydra-headed. It takes many forms, occurs in many formats, yields many formulas. Being many-membered in this manner, it cannot even be limited to its expression in desire and thought, pivotal as these are for human beings and thus tempting as it is to reduce mind to them alone. This is a temptation to which philosophers have often succumbed, whether in terms of the classical division between appetition and cognition, or of Kant's distinction between practical and theoretical reason, or Hume's

separation between impressions of sensation and impressions of passion or "reflection". Reid writes revealingly that "we do not give the name of mind and thought, reason, or desire: but to that being which thinks, which reasons, which desires,"[30] while J.S. Mill says straightforwardly that "mind is the mysterious something which feels and thinks."[31] But mind does more than feel and think; as "mental or psychical being or faculty"[32] in general, it also imagines and perceives -- to mention only two more of its fundamental activities. In their case, too, the deep ingrediency of memory, its role as binding matrix, could be demonstrated.[33]

It should be all the more evident then that remembering is no mere reproduction and replay of experience, much less its pale replica stored dimly and mutely in the mind. The mind itself, and this all of its many modes, is indebted to memory, so much so that we were able to assert earlier that mind *is* memory in important respects, some of which I have begun to sketch in this essay. As a consequence, remembering is not just one mode of mentation among others. On the contrary! Mind itself is com-posed by (and not just *of*) memory, com-present with it all the way through: there is no pre-memorial, pure state of mind which would somehow precede remembering as its cause or source. Cause and effect, source and resource, are one in a fully memorialized minding, the only minding that matters.

Minding can therefore be considered as remembering: to have a mind is to have a memory; to *be* a mind at all is to be able to remember. This is due in part to memory's unifying power, its capacity to make mind *one* out of the diaspora of its daily doings -- to re-member what is inherently many-membered. Beyond the aim of unification is the question of origin and place, destination and substance. Memory in its gathering power contributes massively to each of these last-named dimensions of mind. In so doing, we must say that memory is not only the making of mind -- its coherent constituting as the seat of mentation of every sort -- but *mind itself amassed*. Perhaps this is what the Angles and the Saxons had in mind when they coined the single word *gemynd* to stand for mind and memory alike: mind and memory at once, the two at one with one another, as inseparably together in language then as they are, still, in experience now.

# NOTES

1. Cf. Norman Malcolm, *Memory and Mind* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), *passim*.

2. This etymological information, and that which follows, is taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, entries under "Mind", "Min", "Memory", "Reminding", etc.

3. These are the main meanings listed under *co-* in *Webster's Third International Dictionary*.

4. These are listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary (O.E.D.)*, except that I have inverted the order by putting the second meaning last.

5. Cf. *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), Introduction.

6. Cited in the *O.E.D.* from the Promp. Parr. (1440).

7. See *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

8. Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. A. Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 46.

9. Notice that the *ge-* (which is the exact equivalent of *ga-*) literally survives in "ga-ther" as it does in the German "*ge-sammelte*" (collected, as in collected works, *gesammelte Schriften*).

10. The three essential meanings of *ga-* or *ge-*, according to the *O.E.D.* are being with or together by (1) association in life, occupation, etc.; (2) a collectivity (e.g., as siblings); (3) perfections or intensifications of (1) and (2): it is here that *gemynd* belongs, strictly speaking.

11. *What is Called Thinking?* trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 11. My italics.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Whether this starting-point is itself internal or external does not matter in the present context. We can gather in thoughts just as well as experiences of being resisted by material objects.

17. See Rilke's letter of Nov. 13, 1925 cited in his *Duino Elegies*, trans. J.B. Leishman & S. Spender (New York: Norton, 1963), pp. 128-30.

18. "And all shall be well and all manner of making shall be well when the tongues of flame are in-folded into the crowned knot of fire and the flame and the rose are one." ("Little Gidding", *Four Quarters*).

19. Cited by the *O.E.D.* from Moore's *Power of Soul over Body*, 34d. ed., p. 73.

20. For Husserl's notion see his *Experience and Judgement*, trans. J.S. Churchill & K. Ameriks (Evanson: Northwestern University Press, 1973), sec 87b. For Heidegger's conception of *Verwährnis* as "the fundamental nature and essence of memory", see *What is Called Thinking?* pp. 150-51.

21. Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle I, live 225.

22. No one has recognized this fecund filiation between thinking and remembering more profoundly than Heidegger, who states categorically [at the beginning of *What is Called Thinking*] that "memory" is the gathering of thought", *ibid.*, p. 3. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 143: "When we, in thinking, are gathered and concentrated on the most thought-provoking, then we dwell where all recalling thought is gathered. The gathering of thinking back into what must be thought is what we call the memory."

23. These are adapted from the *O.E.D.*

24. Plato, *Philebus*, p. 35d. My italics.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 35c ("through memory") and p. 36b ("through what we remember").

26. *Ibid.*, p. 36b. My italics.

27. For a treatment of the analogous role of imagination, see my essay, "Imagination comme Intermediare", *Vers une esthétique sans entrave* (Paris: U.G.E., 1975), pp. 93-114.

28. See Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Standard Edition (London: Hogarth, 1953), V, pp. 566-7 & 602.

29. This is the concluding sentence of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Standard Edition, V, p. 621. My italics.

30. Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785), I, 11, p. 42. Cited in O.E.D. under 'Mind' as noun.

31. J.S.Mill, *System of Logic* (1843), 124, sec. 8. Also cited in the O.E.D.

32. This is the third, and last of the *main* definitions of "mind" in the O.E.D. (The first and second are "the faculty of memory" and "thought, purpose, intention" respectively).

33. I have attempted to do just this in my essays "Imagining and Remembering", *Review of Metaphysics* (Dec. 1977) and "Perceiving and Remembering", *Review of Metaphysics* (March, 1979).

# HERMENEUTICS, "GREAT" PHILOSOPHY, AND JASPERS' SCHELLING

**Tom Rockmore**

Prof. J.N. Mohanty has been identified with phenomenology in the deepest and widest sense of the term, including not only Husserl, but Hegel, and more recent forms, such as hermeneutic phenomenology.[1] Now as Gadamer has reminded us, one of the results of hermeneutics, or textual interpretation, is to reveal aspects of a text which surpass the knowledge or intention of its author. The purpose of this paper is to consider Jaspers' important book on Schelling.[2] As we shall see, although Jaspers has a precise aim in view, examination of his work will lead to a very different conclusion than he apparently intends. In that sense, Jaspers' book is an unwitting instance of the fact that texts have a life of their own which frequently escapes full control of their authors.[3]

In his book, Jaspers examines the question of Schelling's putative status as a great philosopher. The frequent reference to great thinkers or great thoughts leaves undetermined the way in which "great" is to be understood. What is a great philosophy? Who is a great philosopher? Is it because others refer to something or someone as great? Is it because of the influence a body of thought or its author exerts either immediately or over time? Is there something which surpasses the relativity of different viewpoints and which is intrinsically great? Or, is it merely a question of the perspective one assumes, as Fichte suggests? Or, to paraphrase Feyerabend's approach to the philosophy of science, are all angles of vision of equal value?

One of the main difficulties of any claim that a given philosophy or philosophy is great is the intrinsically perspectival nature of such a statement. We can illustrate the problem of relativity in different ways. Rorty's well known concern to come to grips with the problem of epistemology, which Hegel regarded as central to the entire philosophical tradition at least since Parmenides, is conducted mainly, or even solely, in terms of Anglo-American analytic thought



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 195–207.

(e.g., Quine, Sellars, Locke), with the exception of the analytic approach to Kant.[4] For Rorty, even the question of the viability of philosophy must be addressed from the analytic angle of vision only. It follows that the negative outcome of his consideration of the possibility of epistemology is at most valid for the analytic genus of the species, but not for philosophy as such. This is an example of the approach to a specific problem.

A second example concerns the perspectivism inherent in the identification of great philosophers and philosophies. Levinas is often regarded as a great, or at least a significant, thinker, as one of the most distinguished living representatives of the French philosophical tradition. According to Levinas, the short list of the most significant works in the history of philosophy includes Plato's *Phaedrus*, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Hegel's *Phenomenology*, Bergson's *Time and Free Will*, and Heidegger's *Being and Time*.[5] Few would omit Plato from such a list, but even fewer would regard the *Phaedrus* as his central text. Many would omit Hegel, and Bergson would appear on few such lists. It is notorious that Russell, who later won the Nobel prize for literature, earlier held that the same award for Bergson was justified since he was not a philosopher. Carnap's dismissive evaluation of Heidegger's thought, particularly his statements on nothing, are well known.

The problem of perspectival relativity is in part responsible for the widespread disagreement in the philosophical tradition as to instances of important, or significant, or great thought. This question is important, but difficult to resolve, since we need to know who the main thinkers are in order to conduct the debate although this is the point at issue. Partly for this reason, even if the concept of great philosophy is often invoked, the notion is rarely examined. Jaspers' study of Schelling, beyond the light it casts on that protean thinker, is important as a rare effort to examine the idea of the nature of great thought.

Jaspers' discussion includes both a central theme and a series of related theses. Even before we turn to Jaspers, it will be useful briefly to describe the background against which he interprets Schelling's thought. Unless the nature of that background is described, it is difficult to appreciate the originality of Jaspers' contribution to an understanding of Schelling.

At present, any reading of Schelling must be viewed in relation to the still dominant reading of the German Idealist tradition, to which his thought belongs both chronologically and in terms of its specific nature. This movement was

brought into existence by Kant and continues in Marx's thought. But in "official" presentations of it, at least since Hegel, there has been a pronounced tendency to limit membership in the official pantheon to three main members: Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. The former, on this reading, is an eccentric neo-Kantian, whose excesses are corrected by Schelling, another transitional figure. After an initial peak in the critical philosophy, their respective forms of what Hegel called "subjective" and "objective" idealism prepare the way for the second, final peak of the tradition in "absolute" idealism. This is the name which later writers, but not Hegel, have almost routinely utilized to designate Hegel's position.

This tendentious reading of the German Idealist tradition was initially formulated by Hegel. It is widely reproduced in histories of philosophy. Perhaps its most elegant form is found in Kroner's classic study.[6] It was continued for the post-Hegelian period by Löwith.[7] Although this reading of German Idealism is not wholly false, as I have argued elsewhere, it is simplistic.[8] One of its limitations is that it renders it difficult to perceive any intrinsic merit in the views of the so-called transitional figures. For this reason, a movement of modest proportions is now under way to rehabilitate both Fichte and Schelling, to correct the official readings of their positions so as to reveal their intrinsic merits beyond their assigned roles in the transition from Kant to Hegel. There is no reason to believe that this is Jaspers' main aim. But his discussion can conveniently be assimilated to the increasingly prevalent revisionist approach to German Idealism, based on the revision of what can here be called Hegelian orthodoxy. For as Jaspers announces, his aim is to reveal the greatness [*Grossartigkeit*] of Schelling's thought.[9]

Jaspers tells us that he had been reading Schelling for some thirty years before he composed his study, but that the relation between them was never that of master and disciple. Certainly, there are evident affinities, for instance in the shared concern with existence as a key to that which is beyond experience. But Jaspers' own thought was apparently constituted in independence from Schelling's, by which he was never deeply attracted, and which he seeks to understand in this book. The possession of his own independent standpoint provides Jaspers with the standard against which to measure the significance of Schelling's contribution.

A convenient point of comparison is Heidegger. The latter's often insightful, but frequently tendentious readings of figures in the history of philosophy, in the

attempt to think the unthought in their views, all too often does violence to the text. At the same time as he reveals new aspects of well known positions, Heidegger tends to read his predecessors as if they had been unsuccessful in writing his own books. Jaspers' discussion is directed less toward the discovery of what a given thinker, in this case Schelling, is unable to think. Rather, his aim is to bring out what that thinker, to the best of his ability, and limited by the imperfection of the language, tried to say. From this perspective, Jaspers' discussion can serve as a hermeneutical model in its concern, in full accord with a Kantian distinction which traverses German Idealism, to be faithful, not to the letter, but to the spirit of Schelling's view.

The main lines of Jaspers's reading of Schelling's thought can now be quickly sketched. They include: an emphasis on Schelling's relation to his wife Caroline and to other German Idealists, the denial that his corpus contains a central text, a related denial that there is a central insight in his thought, and the further denial that his thought undergoes significant change in a career extending over nearly six decades.

Jaspers' account of Schelling's personal relation to other idealists is of great interest. This important dimension is often unjustly neglected. Jaspers' treatment of it is fuller than any I have seen. It is further significant, since what can only be regarded as the defects of Schelling's character, which he largely shared with Fichte, determined to an important extent the direction and manner in which his thought took shape, for instance: in his published attacks on others, and in his insistence on the creation of a philosophy of nature in order to distinguish his thought from Fichte's transcendental philosophy.

This point is well taken. Perhaps because philosophers routinely portray their thought as in but not of time, we tend to overlook the extent to which a given thinker is shaped not only by his times, a point recently made by Manfred Buhr for Fichte, but by who he is. But all such facts are not relevant. I remain unconvinced by Jaspers' interesting discussion of Schelling's relation to Caroline, which Jaspers' regard as "indispensable" (*unerläßlich*) to interpret the position.[10] It is doubtless true that they had an exceptional marriage, and its importance for him was not diminished by her early death. But Jaspers does not provide any convincing reason for his view that through his relationship to this woman Schelling became aware of what separated him from the other great idealist philosophers of his time.[11] In fact, one can go further to say that claims of this

kind are notoriously unreliable and difficult to make out as, for instance, the assertion by John Stuart Mill of the extent to which his own work was influenced by Harriet Taylor, or the well known ideological tendency to regard Marx and Engels as a single creative mind.

The other basic elements of Jaspers' reading of Schelling are equally controversial, but less easily to analyze. Jaspers suggests repeatedly in passing that Schelling's view is deeper than Hegel's. This claim is related to Jaspers' belief that a view is not directly given, but must be read out, as it were, from between the lines, in the interstices of what is directly said. Jaspers' suggestion, then, is that Schelling's view contains insights which he is unable to develop.[12] Now to a certain extent this is true of all positions. Despite Maimon's suggestion that the critical philosophy could not be further developed without falling below Kant's level, it must be seldom that an idea is fully worked out. The further problem is to ascertain which, if any, of Schelling's insights is deeper than Hegel's, or what precisely "deeper" means in this context.

Jaspers doesn't tell us. But I suspect that he means that Schelling's importance is to show us the limits of categorial thought by indicating what it cannot grasp, for instance, the Absolute, or God. But that point is doubly difficult to make out. From the Kantian perspective, it presupposes claims about what cannot rationally be known, and hence are difficult to assert without falling into the kind of predicament familiar in Kant's position. It presupposes as well the kind of Kantian distinction between appearance and reality which Schelling appeals to as the basis of his *Potenzlehre*, but which is inimical to Hegel's own position. And if, on the other hand, one attempts to make out a rational argument for an absolute, then the limits of Schelling's own abstract concept are clearly revealed by the well known, but highly pertinent Hegelian critique. For these reasons, as concerns insights allegedly deeper than Hegel's, any claim for the profundity of Schelling's position is at least suspect.

It is difficult to respond to Jaspers's assertion that Schelling's thought does not undergo change, or basic change, over the course of his lengthy career. This claim is based on two points: the observation that all the ideas which Schelling later develops are already contained in various forms in the *Systemfragment* or *Systemprogramm* from 1796; and on the further observation that the later changes in terminology and the many, often obvious, inconsistencies should not be

allowed to hide the similarity of the basic perspective that Schelling never fundamentally modifies.

As concerns the first point, discussion since Jaspers' work appeared in 1955 tends to attribute the *Systemprogramm* not to Schelling but to Hegel, and to date it slightly later than 1800 during the latter's Frankfurt period. Were this to be the case, which cannot be decided here, the result would be to undermine the effort to demonstrate Schelling's influence on Hegel through this text. In fact, if we follow the logic of Jaspers' argument, the change in perspective, which follows from a reattribution of the text in question to Hegel, provides a strong case for the latter's decisive influence on Schelling's thought from 1800 throughout its later development.

Schelling's own influence on Hegel, which has in any event been overestimated in the secondary literature due to a misunderstanding of Fichte's impact on Hegel, would turn out to be the mere effect of Schelling's speed in composition as opposed to Hegel's more plodding work habits. On the other hand, the suggestion that Schelling's thought does not even develop the ideas already present in the early sketch of what was to become idealism depends in part for its plausibility upon the extent to which the original view is modified. Certainly it is possible to argue that Kant's original view changed greatly, whereas for both Hegel and Marx the final writings were merely the consequence of elucidating the implications already present in earlier texts, for Hegel in the *Differenzschrift* and for Marx in the *Paris Manuscripts* of 1844.

Jaspers' argument for the conceptual stasis in Schelling's position depends upon the dual denial that Schelling is either a systematic thinker or that his thought is based on a single insight. Now these two points should not be confused. One can be a systematic thinker, that is, interested in the concept of system, and yet be unable to produce a fully systematic position of one's own. This claim seems descriptive of Schelling's case, above all as concerns the so-called *Indifferenzpunkt*, which Hegel satirized in the *Phenomenology*, but which was ingredient for his own concept of the concrete absolute. Indeed, in a sense, Jaspers acknowledges this point. For he suggests that Schelling was the first to develop the concept of system to its fullest extent.[13] But this assertion, which remains unclear, is surely difficult to accept without further discussion, indeed absent in Jaspers' text. Even in the immediate philosophical tradition, there are numerous other concepts of system, e.g., Kant's position, influenced by Wolff

and Lambert, or later in Fichte and Hegel, not to mention Reinhold's different view, or in Condillac and other forms of Cartesian and post-Cartesian rationalism, including Spinoza.

The more important point is surely whether Schelling's position is systematic, for instance, whether it incarnates a single or small number of basic insights, out of which it develops and whose consequences it elaborates. Now it is obvious that Schelling is not a systematic thinker in the Hegelian sense, or even in the weaker Kantian or Fichte versions. In this way, he differs from the other major idealists, all of whom, including Marx, were rigorously systematic writers. Schelling not only fails to realize a system in any obvious form; indeed, to the extent that his thought is systematic, it is, as Sandkühler has perceptively noted, a "System ohne Systemsanspruch".[14]

So far, despite its undoubted interest, Jaspers' reading of Schelling does not, I believe, break new ground. Its point of originality lies in the denial that there is any central insight in Schelling's thought.[15] This point is doubly important in the context of a Schelling interpretation. For it runs squarely against efforts in the literature to identify a central theme in the diverse writings of this protean thinker. And it renders it difficult, although not impossible, to sustain, as Jaspers tried to do, the claim that a philosopher without a central theme should nonetheless be recognized as a major thinker.

I have said that Jaspers' interpretation of this point runs counter to the current discussion of Schelling in the literature. In order to see what is at stake, it is necessary to comment, albeit briefly, on the current state of Schelling research. For present purposes, it will be sufficient to distinguish five major interpretative approaches to Schelling's overall position. Within the German Idealist tradition, we can differentiate the approaches represented by Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling himself, hardly a disinterested party.

Fichte's interpretation is based on an apparent misunderstanding of Schelling's concern to supplement transcendental philosophy with a philosophy of nature. This is an undertaking Hegel made basic to his own thought and to his associated criticisms of Fichte and Kant as philosophers of subjectivity. Hegel's perspectives has not found defenders recently. Fichte's reading of his relation to Schelling has found an increasing degree of support in recent years in the writings of Lauth,[16] as well as in those of Baumanns,[17] Siep,[18] Philonenko[19] and Girndt.[20]

Schelling's self-interpretation rests on an invidious reading of his relation to Hegel. He holds that Hegel developed his own early views, which he later

surpassed in writings intended as the fulfillment of idealism. Schelling's self-interpretation has been adopted in varying forms in the recent discussion, in which we can differentiate at least three sub-variants: Tilliette[21] stresses the continuity of Schelling's thought through change; Schulz[22] emphasizes the claim that idealism reaches its peak in the late Schelling. Janke has recently reaffirmed this point in the assertion that the high water mark of the German idealist movement lies jointly in Schelling's later thought and in Fichte's 1804 version of the *Wissenschaftslehre*.[23] And Heidegger,[24] and following him Vetõ,[25] stress the discussion of freedom as the central insight, which provides the real thread running through Schelling's corpus.

In comparison, we can see at once that Jaspers' reading of Schelling does not conflict with those of Fichte and Hegel. But it is clearly at odds with Schelling's self-indulgent understanding of his own position as the summit of German Idealism. Further, it is in tension with the belief that his position contains a novel insight. It is clear that there is an insight of some kind, since it is not otherwise possible to comprehend Schelling's repeated attempts, extending over many years, to clarify his thought. After the *Differenzschrift*, Hegel took no notice of Schelling's developments. He continued to regard the *System of Transcendental Idealism* as Schelling's basic text. For the most part, later interpreters tend to avoid a similar degree of identification with a single text, a point with which Jaspers agrees. Later interpreters of Schelling mainly argue for the central importance of the concept of freedom as a pervasive insight relating many apparently disparate themes in his corpus.

Jaspers' treatment of Schelling's idea of freedom is basic to his attempt to discredit any effort to identify a central insight on the latter's writings.[26] Here we must distinguish between the continual presence of a theme, which for this reason becomes central, and a central or, more precisely, novel insight, an idea which a particular author either brings forth *de novo* or more likely elaborates through the transformation or rethinking of an idea borrowed from another theory. Now we can safely admit the stress on the concept of freedom, which is the point urged by Heidegger, Vetõ, and others, without being obliged to concede that this represents a novel insight. This idea is central to all of German Idealism. It will be recalled that Kant founds his moral philosophy upon it. In a letter to Reinhold (January 8, 1800), Fichte asserts that his *Wissenschaftslehre* is the first system of freedom. Hegel regards history as the theater of the

realization of the idea of freedom. And Marx's criticism of capitalism is precisely focussed on the denial of real human freedom.

In his discussion, Jaspers is not concerned with others' views, but on Schelling's own concept of freedom. He denies there is progress in the clarification of this concept in Schelling's later writings and he further denies that this concept initially represents a novel insight. According to Jaspers, in the main, Schelling simply takes up the concept repeatedly as if he had never done so. But it seems more plausible to follow Vetõ here, who suggests that Schelling's appeal to freedom is not novel. He notes that this theme is continuous with the views of Kant and Fichte; and he plausibly maintains that in his later writings Schelling clarifies the idea he stated early in the so-called ***Freiheitschrift***. Examples of later discussion tending to support this interpretation of Schelling's doctrine include his treatment of the relation of space and time, the account of responsibility, and Christology.

I agree with Jaspers that Schelling's doctrine of freedom is not an original view. It follows that Schelling scholars need to be careful in their claims for what Jaspers correctly identifies as the single most deeply rooted insight in Schelling's thought. In consequence, it becomes too difficult to make out the claim for the greatness of a thinker whose thought, on Jaspers's reading, is devoid of a single conceptual advance, or development, or even conceptual unity, criteria that in the past have on occasion been proposed as identifying characteristics of a major thinker. Since he cannot claim that there is a dimension intrinsic to Schelling's thought which renders it important, Jaspers is forced to employ a different approach to make out his claim. Jaspers's strategy is to suggest that Schelling's position is significant in virtue of its difference from others, a difference which supposedly accords with modernity.

Jaspers argues for this point with an uncharacteristic hesitancy, uncharacteristic of his otherwise fine commentary. He makes his argument in at least two ways. First, he suggests, in almost Heideggerean terminology, that the greatness and fate of German Idealist philosophy is to be grasped only through a glimpse of the radical turn away from [*die radikale Abkehr von*] critical philosophy.[27] Now this form of argument is unconvincing for several reasons. Jaspers fails to document the sense in which Schelling's position represents a turning away from Kant. There are obvious differences between Schelling's thought, critical

philosophy, and other forms of German Idealism. But the term "*Abkehr*" seems strangely out of place in this context.

In a closely Kantian sense, one can read the entire later German Idealist tradition as a perhaps misguided effort to be true to the spirit of Kant's position while denying its letter. An obvious example is the lengthy attempt, which runs through the views of Reinhold and Maimon, Fichte and Hegel, Schulze and Fries, all whom reconstruct critical philosophy in systematic form.[28] Later German Idealism cannot, then, be usefully regarded as a betrayal of Kant's position in any simple sense, or even as a betrayal at all. On the contrary, it seems closer to the mark to stress the extent to which the effort to be true to the spirit of critical philosophy required Kant's epigones to deny the letter of his thought.

Second, Jaspers suggests that Schelling's greatness as a philosopher consists in the identification of a specific element of modernity which receives its first echo in his thought, and that for this reason, Schelling offers the first modern philosophical position. Jaspers makes this point in various ways with relation to the *Brüchigkeit*[29] or *Aufgebrochenheit*[30] of Schelling's view. Jaspers seems to argue, in a way closely related to his own concern with *Existenz*, that as a kind of protoexistential thinker the very disconnectedness of Schelling's thought, its very inconstancy, bears witness to its constant attention to the surrounding, but mutable world.

It is difficult to accord much weight to this point. Certainly, as the other German Idealists, Schelling wrote in a time in which the old order was in rapid flux, a tendency which has since gained in importance. Arguably, philosophy not only appears in, but is also subject to, the constraints of time. But the attention to human existence which Jaspers has in mind is insufficient to justify the overly plastic character of Schelling's thought, and even less sufficient to justify its claims to significance. The conceptual fragility of Schelling's position may be a sign of the times, but it is not an argument for its importance.

Jaspers concludes his study with the remark that a great thinker always expresses something essential, even a great untruth, which serves as a warning.[31] This remark is useful, although it casts no light on Schelling. Jaspers wears both philosophical and psychiatric hats. But as a philosopher, Jaspers fails to convince us that Schelling is a great philosopher. Rather, with respect to Schelling, it is as a psychiatrist that Jaspers is more persuasive. For he suggests

a reason why this enormously gifted, precocious youth was unable to concretize his obvious abilities.

The reason seems to lie in a neurotic character, which Jaspers describes well, and which prevented Schelling from maintaining a durable relationship with other colleagues, and, one may surmise, with his own work. Schelling's undeniable youthful brilliance was combined with a personality which made impossible the enormous intensity of a Fichte or the quiet work of the concept exhibited by Hegel. Against his intentions, Jaspers convinces us that Schelling is not a thinker of the first rank, since he has no central contribution attached to his name. More precisely, Jaspers' fine study shows that Schelling is an unusual flash in the pan, so to speak, since his intellectual gifts were accompanied by a personality which prevented him from bringing his promise to fruition.

## NOTES

1. For his increasing attention to hermeneutics, see particularly J.N. Mohanty, *Transcendental Phenomenology: An Analytical Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

2. See Karl Jaspers, *Schelling: Größe und Verhängnis* (Munich: Piper, 1955). For a discussion of this work, see Jürgen Habermas, "Karl Jaspers über Schelling" in *Philosophisch-politische Profile*, (Frankfurt a.M.:Suhrkamp, 1973), pp. 93-97.

3. This idea is more common in literature than in philosophy. For a literary example of this principle, see Miguel de Unamuno, *Niebla* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1966), chapter xxxi, pp. 147-154; e.g. p. 153: "¡Oh, si es por eso, yo le juro, señor de Unamuno, que no me mataré, que no me quitaré esta vida que Dios o usted me han dado; se lo juro.... Ahora que usted quiere matarme, quiero yo vivir, vivir...".

4. See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

5. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethique et infini: Dialogues avec Philippe Nemo* (Paris: Fayard, 1982), pp. 27-28.

6. See Richard Kroner, *Von Kant bis Hegel* (Tübingen: Siebeck, 1921 & 1924), 2 vols.

7. See Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche: The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought*, trans. by David E. Green, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967).

8. See Tom Rockmore, "Hegel, l'homme agissant, et la philosophie allemande moderne" in *Archives de philosophie*, vol. 44, no. 1, pp. 3-19.

9. Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

11. See *Ibid.*, p. 42.

12. See *Ibid.*, pp. 265, 307, 311.

13. See *Ibid.*, p. 110.

14. See Hans-Jorg Sandkühler, *Friedrich Joseph Schelling*, (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1970), p. 172.

15. E.g., see Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

16. See Reinhard Lauth, *Zur Idee der Transzendental-Philosophie* (Munich and Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1965).

17. See Peter Baumanns, *Fichtes ursprüngliche System: Sein Standort zwischen Kant und Hegel* (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1972).

18. See Ludwig Siep, *Hegels Fichtekritik und die Wissenschaftslehre von 1804* (Freiburg i.B.: Alber Verlag, 1970).

19. See Alexis Philonenko, *La liberté humaine dans la philosophie de Fichte* (Paris: Vrin, 1966).

20. See Helmut Girndt, *Die Differenz des Fichteschen und Hegelschen Systems in der Hegelschen Differenzschrift* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1965).

21. See Xavier Tilliette, *Schelling: Une philosophie en devenir* (Paris: Vrin, 1970), 2 vols.

22. See Walter Schultz, *Die Vollendung des deutschen Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1955).

23. See Wolfgang Janke, *Fichte -- Sein Und Reflexion: Grundlagen der kritischen Vernunft* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970).

24. See Martin Heidegger, *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit (1809)*, ed. H. Feick, (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1971).

25. See Miklos Vetö, *Le fondement selon Schelling* (Paris: Beauchesnes, 1977).

26. See Jaspers, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-162 and 173.

27. See *Ibid.*, p. 113.

28. For a discussion of this point, see Tom Rockmore, *Hegel's Circular Epistemology* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1986), esp. chapter 2: "Epistemological Justification: System, Foundation, and Circularity", pp. 16-44.

29. Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 231.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 344.

# REPRESENTATION AND THE HISTORICAL SCIENCES

**Lester Embree**

## Introduction

This essay is an exercise in constitutive or Husserlian phenomenology. First it is shown how signitive consciousness or, preferably, representational awareness contrasts with presentational awareness and has three and only three species. This analysis is freely derived from Husserl's 1st "Logical Investigation" and is then used to elucidate the evidencing (*Evidenz*) that in archeology, art history, and historiography corrigibly justifies believing in objects in the realm of predecessors which, as such, cannot be objects of presentational awareness. Whether the second part of this account overlaps a part of the Husserlian corpus or not is not known, the point being more to engage in phenomenological investigation of the matters themselves than in scholarship on the master's texts.

## Representational Awareness

Whereas Husserl proposes the qualifier *signitive* in the *Logical Investigations* (and this may be exciting for those devoted to semiotics and structuralism), it seems preferable for phenomenologists to use the qualifier *representational* if only for the neat verbal contrast with *presentational* that it affords. This usage ought not to be significantly misleading if the doctrine of representationalism is firmly rejected. That doctrine holds that all awareness is representational. Representationalism is probably a generalization beyond the fact that a great deal of human awareness is representational. Its origin and centuries of acceptance deserve detailed historical and phenomenological critique, but a brief systematic refutation ought to suffice here. If clear cases can be reflectively observed in which there are serious and fictive awarenesses of objects in the now and in the past and in



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 209–217.

which no intermediary "image" or representation between the awareness and its object can be found, then it is false that all awareness is representational. And reflective observation upon the serious perception of the wall across the room discloses no representation; reflective observing of the recollecting of a past object, e.g., the last time one drove a car, shows the recollective awareness going on in the now, the recollected driving effort it is intentive to as in the past, but no "memory image" in between. Moreover, reflective observing of fictive perceiving of a kangaroo across the room or of a fictively remembered kangaroo in the car yesterday also discloses no "phantasy image" between the feigning awareness and the object feigned. Not all awareness is representational.

When the awareness is not representational it can be called *presentational.* Alternatively, one can speak of *indirect* and *direct* awareness. Perception, recollection, expectation, and the corresponding fictive versions are presentational. They access their objects without intermediary. *Representational awareness*, however, has in general some sort of intermediary. That is because it is stratified. The infrastratum of representational awareness is a presentational component that is intentive, generally speaking, to an immediate object that, in view of its function in the whole, it is most convenient to call a *representation.* The superstratum of the representational awareness is intentive to something else that can best be called the *representatum* or, in the plural, *representata.* But only upon reflection are the representedness of the representatum as well as the representingness of the representation and the stratifiedness of the representational awareness recognized. In straightforward or unreflective life, there is simply the focal object or *theme* of the entire compound awareness. When one uses a stereo or record player normally, i.e., does not focus on the noise made by the machine by the wall, one thematizes an orchestra playing somewhere and sometime else than there in one's room. This general description will become clearer in relation to some illustrations of the species that come under the genus of representational awareness of objects.

The species of representational awareness that has mistakenly been of greatest concern to intellectuals is best called *linguistically representational awareness* or simply *linguistic awareness.* Those who deal in words tend to focus on words like those who deal in shoes tend to focus on shoes. The other and less appreciated species of representational awareness may be described first.

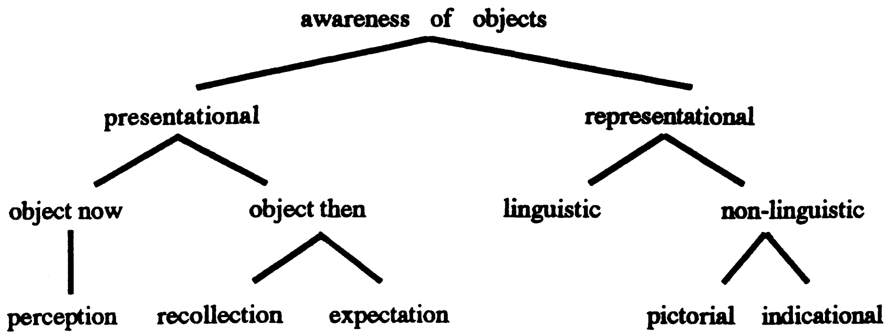
*Pictorially representational awareness*, or simply *pictorial awareness*, has a representation correlative to the infrastratum that to some degree resembles the representatum intended to in the superstratum. Among ordinary objects, mirrors are, except for the reversal of the representation and hence the representatum, remarkably accurate. Pictures, whether still or moving, paintings, footprints, shadows, etc., are also quite familiar, but one ought to beware of two things. One is privileging two-dimensional pictorial representations, which seem easier to create, over those in bas- relief and fully in the round, including three-dimensional scale models and holographs. The other and more significant thing to beware of is the tendency to emphasize visual representation when such things as radios, tape players, and telephones are predominatory *auditory* representations. Except for a few cases, such as how the scent on the lover's pillow can "depict" her in her absence, olfactory, gustatory, and tactual representations seem comparably rare. These examples are relatively pure in only having one sensuous modality predominate, but they are also pure in not mixing pictorial awareness with other species of representational awareness. If a less visualistic qualifier than *pictorial* was available, it could be used. Perhaps *depiction* better names a representation of this species than "picture" does.

If there were a way in which to measure such matters, the most frequent sort of representational awareness would prove to be what is best called *indicationally representational awareness* or, briefly, *indicational awareness*. Here there is no resemblance between the representation and the representatum, i.e., indications are not depictions. One is aware that friends are home on the basis of the awareness of their lights being on, one is aware a parking space will become available on the basis of seeing someone digging out her keys as she enters the parking lot, one is aware of the janitor having come by on the basis of seeing the emptied wastebasket, and one is aware of one-way traffic and its direction even when it is not going by when one sees cars parked facing the same direction on both sides of the street. More subtly but significantly, one is aware of people's personalities, moods, and dispositions on the basis of voice tones and cadences, facial expressions and gestures, gaits and postures and also of their class, ethnic group, regional background, occupation, gender, sexual orientation, etc., on the basis of presentational awareness not only of somatic phenomena but also by their clothing, housing, and other equipment. Perhaps this begins to confirm that the class of indicational representations is highly populated.

Indicational representations can and ought to be extensively subclassified. For example, there are the deliberately established and standardized indications that might be called *signals*; there are many in the transportation sphere. Most indications are, however, unstandardized. The posture that indicates rude disinterest in some societies, regions, or classes may indicate graceful acquiescence in others. All representations are cultural. One must even learn that the cessation of breathing indicates death. Clearly representational awareness can also be mistaken. How mistakes are recognized is an interesting question, especially under circumstances where there cannot be presentational awareness of the theme that is represented; this will be returned to presently. Representational awareness is also corrigible. Indeed, the acquisition, disposal, and adjustment of representations, be they indications, depictions, or words goes on almost constantly in our intentive lives. And it may also be observed that, just as there are fictive as well as serious versions of presentational awareness, one can also be aware of a fictive object on the basis of either a serious or a fictive representation of it.

The claim that there are three and only three species of representational awareness deserves attention. It is supported if (a) representations can be divided into the linguistic and the non-linguistic and (b) the non-linguistic representations can be divided exhaustively into the pictorial and the indicational according to whether the representation resembles the representatum or not. The taxonomy envisaged, including the presentational genus, can be represented by Figure 1 on the following page.

Figure 1.




The present writer has thus far failed to find a representation that falls under a species other than the three mentioned.

That which is here called *linguistic awareness* has the same global stratification as other species of representational awareness. Its infrastratum is an awareness intentive to a verbal representation that can generally be called a *word*. The superstratum is intentive to whatever that word refers to or signifies, the representatum being then a significandum. That which is different about linguistic awareness lies in how the infrastratum is further stratified. In the presentational awareness, there is a sensuous or quasi-sensuous awareness of an object that becomes the vehicle or *carrier* of the signification, and the *signification*, which it carries and which signifies the significandum, is constituted in a process moment that is cogitative, i.e., in thinking. See Figure 2 on the following page.

Figure 2.

(2) superstratum or founded awareness--------------→(theme)

(1) infrastratum of founding awareness-------------→[word]

(b) Thinking---------------→[signification

(a) Perceiving--------------→ carrier]

Here the arrows represent strata and substrata of the whole representational intentive process, that which is between brackets is the verbal representation or word, which analyzes into signification and carrier correlative to perceiving and thinking, and that which is between parentheses is the object not only for the superstratum but also the theme of the entire process. The carrier can be perceptually seen, heard, touched (in Braille) or recollected or expected or feigned as sensed. Parallel to the species of comprehension called reading and hearing there are species of expression called writing and speaking. Expressing may have more prominent relation with volition and somatic movement, and relations with emotion might be more prominent in comprehending, but essentially they are species of the general structure diagrammed.

As asserted, linguistically representational awareness is of the greatest interest to intellectuals. Linguisticism is the vice of modelling not only all representational awareness but even awareness in general on linguistically representational awareness. This can have subtle forms. Eminent phenomenologists have been heard to contend that a dance can express a signification. If this were so, then the moving and gesturing of dancers would be not like words but would actually be words, and one could look for the semantics and the syntactics and ask which gesture shows the tense. That is not impossible. More likely, however, if the dancers and their movements are representational at all (and they might well represent gods), the mode of representational awareness is pictorial and/or indicational, and there is an accompanying narrative in spoken or, in some opera now, written form, which can also be expressed in a libretto or in spoken plot summary before, during, or after the dance or even by the audience aloud or in

a sub-vocal expression. To be *accompanied by* words, which indeed express significations, is not the same as to *carry* signification. More generally, one should watch out for cases where *to mean* signifies *to represent* either in general or in a species other than that of *to signify*. Finally, lest one be attracted by the logicism of considering all representation inferential, one should consider that inference properly speaking pertains to propositions, which are significations, and hence correlates of linguistically representational awareness. There is no inference in pictorial or indicational awareness as such.

Regarding the main issue in question at this point, then, the linguistic awareness is the awareness in the infrastratum of which there is awareness of an expression in which a signification is carried. If one cannot upon reflection find a signification in the representation, then one is dealing with a non-linguistic awareness. The linguistic expressions can be artificial as well as natural and include symbolic diagrams like those used above, the components and their relations of which can be glossed in words of the more common sort.

The three species of representational awareness of objects have thus far been addressed in their purity. In the case of television "watching", however, all three species are instantiated. One may thematize what the television commentator is talking about, but one's belief and emotions may well be more influenced by that which is non-linguistically represented by background music, how actors move and lean toward and away from one another, and by the lighting of the scene. All of this is rather implicit, when, for example, in "watching" a film of George Washington's childhood, one thematizes a boy growing up in an early 18th C. English colony in North America called Virginia. Given this influence of non-linguistic representation and the rise and spread of equipment for producing and distributing audio-visual (and linguistic) representations, it may well be that the era of legitimacy for intellectual preoccupation with texts is ending, whether or not intellectuals have recognized it yet.

## Historical Knowing

The foregoing may be good constitutive phenomenological description, accurate as far as it goes, but it is bad philosophy to the degree that no explicit philosophical purpose is served by it. How this analysis can now be used to

elucidate the core phenomenon in the epistemology of the historical sciences can be shown briefly. The historical sciences include *archeology, art history,* and *historiography*. In each of these often overlapping disciplines, the wise researcher uses all the data of every sort that she can get, but remains, depictions, and words are emphasized differently in the different disciplines.

The central epistemological issue for phenomenology concerns the *Evidenz* that can justify believing and thus make it knowing. The traditional translation of *Evidenz* as *evidence* can be misleading in at least American English, where evidence is usually things displayed in plastic bags on evidence tables or statements given on the stand in courtrooms, rather than intentive processes (*Erlebnisse*). Hence the expression *evidencing* may be preferred. The general epistemological issue takes a specific form for the historical sciences by virtue of the focus on the social realm of what Schutz called predecessors. That realm is beyond the reach of the researcher's recollection and hence not accessible to presentational awareness of any serious sort. The technique of testing representations against the objects of perception or recollection that works in other realms will not work for that of predecessors. Nevertheless, the representations themselves can be given in person. These can be texts, depictions, and indications (of which archeological remains are a subspecies) and are what are best called the *data* in historical science. On the basis of awareness of relevant data, then, the trained researcher has learned to be aware of representata that are past objects. This representational awareness is the evidencing that justifies knowing in historical science.

As in the representational awareness in prescientific life, historical evidencing is somewhat plastic, involves learning, and is corrigible. Thus, if the data change, the current believing and what is believed to have happened in the past are justifiably altered. New texts, depictions, and remains can be found. Then again, the examination of data already on hand leads to the rejection of data as spurious or to a different awareness of what they are. And of course change in the data can lead to confirmation as well as revision of what had been believed had happened and of the models by which continuity and change over time is explained. Depending on the quantity and quality of the data, different degrees of assurance from scepticism through positive and negative conjecture and certitude can be critically supported and, since the representations or data are

public objects of possible presentational awareness, representational awareness can be intersubjective and the knowledge of the past can hence be objective.

As an additional point, it may be observed that not only does the representational awareness in pure and many mixed cases function in the historical sciences to justify believing in the past, but also, on that basis, there can be historical truth. Truth is a species of representational adequacy that pertains to linguistic awareness, more precisely to how expressed propositions relate to the theme of verbally representational awareness, which reflection calls the representatum. If the theme is as alleged in the proposition, then the proposition is true. If not, then it is false. The theme can be observed reflectively to be a matter of a representatum that is believed in. Hence, the justification of the believing also supports the possible certification of truth. For example, if all reliable representations from the time are texts in which it is said that George Washington died of pneumonia, then the historian is justified in believing in that, at least so long as her data do not change, and if she asserts "George Washington died of pneumonia," then that proposition is true.

In sum, while there is far more to the relevant matter themselves, the phenomenology of representational awareness is important for the epistemology of the historical sciences.

# HEGEL'S CRITIQUE OF PSYCHOLOGISM

**Frank M. Kirkland**

At the end of his masterful study *Frege: The Philosophy of Language*, Michael Dummett, the doyen of Frege scholarship, argues with a certain modicum of self-assurance that idealism, especially Hegel's, "is by its very nature prone to slip into psychologism, although the possibility of a viable idealistic theory of meaning depends precisely upon the possibility of resisting this temptation."[1] Dummett claims furthermore that in "Frege's day the kind of idealism that was everywhere prevalent in the philosophical schools was infected with psychologism through and through. [So] it was not until it had been decisively overthrown that it became possible to envisage a non-psychologistic version of idealism."[2] For Dummett, Frege presides over the requiem of idealism through his critique of psychologism, a critique which, by implication, would toss Hegel's idealism into the historical litter basket that, in Dummett's view, so obviously yawns for it.[3]

Unsurprisingly, however, Dummett's claim that Frege rings the death knell of idealism, particularly that of Hegel's, cannot withstand closer historical examination of the facts. Hegel's idealism ceased to have a dominant philosophical influence during the 1830's, giving way to various philosophical schools like materialism, existentialism, and scientific naturalism. So its fall from philosophical grace took place long before the publication of Frege's *Begriffschrift* (1879). Moreover, and apparently unbeknownst to Dummett, psychologism first emerged in the work of Jakob Fries, a contemporary of Hegel, as a philosophical position representing a reaction against and a reformation of what was seriously taken as the errors and excesses of Hegel's arguments in the *Science of Logic*.[4] In short, psychologism represented an *anti-Hegelian* position, and therefore did not bear any close affinity with Hegel's idealism as Dummett appears to maintain.

Be the historical facts as they may, Dummett's remarks nevertheless do provide illuminating signposts for rethinking Hegel's idealism, specifically as



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 219–244.

found in his *Logic*.[5] Although Hegel never patently claimed his absolute idealism to be a "non-psychologistic version of idealism", I do believe that it is possible to give an account of Hegel's *Logic* along that line. This will be the primary guiding theme of this essay. I shall subscribe to the view that if the *Logic* is an idealist account engaged in (a) developing non-empirical self-determined grounds for reflexively comprehensive and comprehensible claims about any object and (b) thematizing the complex conceptual structure required of these grounds to be criterial in establishing the objective worthiness of such claims, then not only is it secured against any tendency toward psychologism, but also carries with it a dyslogistic consideration of psychologism.

The essay is comprised of four sections. The first section will address the question "What is psychologism?". The second will examine briefly the thoughts of Jakob Fries. The third will look at Hegel's *Logic*, exploring in very summary fashion "The Logic of the Concept", in order to demonstrate the abovementioned thesis. The fourth section will offer some supplementary remarks on the ramifications of this project.

## I

Contemporary philosophers have a strong penchant for regarding psychologism as a philosophical position which generally conflates the objective with the subjective features of human knowledge. This characterization, however, is inadequate because it does not sufficiently differentiate psychologism from empirical idealism or phenomenalism. Although the characterization above can be used to cover both psychologism and phenomenalism, there are three aspects of psychologism which are criterial in setting it off from phenomenalism, viz., (1) its status as a science or theory of logic, (2) its non-subscription to skepticism *by design*, and (3) its philosophical propensity toward scientific naturalism.

Regarding (1), psychologism is alleged to be a science of logic, because it registers the claim that logical and epistemic principles can derive their objectivity and necessity from empirical psychological inquiry into mental episodes.[6] It thus declares that psychology is the basis of logic. The problem with psychologism's claim is that a science requires the formulation of arguments which must conform to logical rules, otherwise it could not be a science. Since psychology is a science, it has to conform to such rules and, hence, cannot be

the foundation of logic as psychologism maintains. Moreover, psychologism's claim amounts to blurring the mental processes, from which arguments originate, with the grounds on which arguments are justified. Such a position would violate psychologism itself as a *science* of logic, because the validity of its arguments would hinge upon the psychological acts of thinking rather than upon logical rules according to which and not from which theoretical arguments are formulated. And such a position would entail that psychologism's own "scientific" claims, the contents of its "scientific" judgements or thoughts, would have to be *either non-propositional and non-predicative or based on some non-propositional and non-predicative knowledge*. Phenomenalism, on the other hand, makes no such claim and, hence, is not subject to the problem of that claim. It simply asserts that knowledge is immediate knowledge of the mental items of our sensory experience.

Regarding (2), although psychologism entails conflating the [*objective and non-empirical*] contents of logic with the [*subjective and empirical*] items of psychology, it does not by intention produce a skepticism about cognitive or epistemic access to a mind-independent or material domain of objects. Psychologism holds the following theses. (a) If the contents of logic (meanings, thoughts, propositions, concepts) exist "in the head", so to speak, then knowing the meaning of a term is being in a particular mental episode. (b) If meaning establishes reference, then the meaning of a term establishes the truth conditions that any object must satisfy in order to be a member of the extension of that term. Given (a) and (b) alone, however, psychologism is unable to explain how mental episodes can refer to or set truth conditions for claims about mind-independent objects, despite the intent of (b) to establish epistemic access to such objects. As a result, psychologism can yield a skepticism *by consequence*. Phenomenalism, on the other hand, entails conflating the [*objective and empirical*] items of the material domain with the [*subjective and empirical*] items of one's sensory encounter of that domain. It produces the abovementioned skepticism, because it dictates restricting cognitive access to the mind-dependent contents of one's sensory experience only. In short, phenomenalism does yield a skepticism *by design*.

Regarding (3), psychologism is in accord with naturalism. This is the reason why skepticism looms only as a possibility, if at all, for it. Naturalism claims that there is a uniformity amongst objects, regardless of their mind-dependence

or mind-independence, insofar as they are natural objects situated in a causal network of spatio-temporal objects and events. If there are objects that are not situated in this network, then there is no place for them within nature's causal order of things. Naturalism thus does not countenance non-natural objects, unless it is adopted by some research program or theoretical strategy to reduce such objects to some type or token of the causal order. Psychologism employs naturalism by interpreting non-empirical contents of logic as non-natural objects[7] and claiming them continuous with mind-dependent items subject to causal laws. It thus holds that there is a homogeneity of natural objects crossing the realms of the logical and the mental, crossing the sciences of logic and psychology. All this does not entail that psychologism and naturalism are identical, since naturalism is simply a position affirming the uniformity of objects as natural objects within the world's causal order. Nonetheless, psychologism endorses this position in its own theoretical formulation of arguments as a science of logic and, in so doing, it reveals its philosophical propensity toward naturalism. On this note, psychologism is what I would call a kind of *"meta-naturalism"*, because it reflectively poses *by design* naturalistic limits in its forging of theoretical arguments concerning the logical and the mental. Phenomenalism, on the other hand, is not aligned with naturalism, since it entails reducing everything to mind-dependent items of sensory experience. But if it is to stake "meta-naturalistic" claims, then it reflectively renders *by consequence* mind-dependent items of sensory experience or, in this case, the mental continuous with all natural objects or, in this case, the physical. Neither non-natural objects nor the non-empirical contents of logic come into play here.

*So psychologism can be defined as a science of logic whose theory construction does not support by design the theme of skepticism since it endorses naturalistically continuity of the logical with the mental.* If the three criteria are adequate for distinguishing psychologism from phenomenalism or empirical idealism, what then does it mean, as Dummett himself maintains, that idealism, empirical or otherwise, "is by its very nature prone to slip into psychologism"? Clearly empirical idealism would not be prone in the light of those criteria, unless it takes, for example, the Quinean route of surrendering epistemology and settling for psychology, in short, by "naturalizing epistemology".[8] In so doing, the notions of good reasons, justification, and warranted assertion would be abandoned. Furthermore, the notion of evidence would have to be altered such

that it would become understood as the sensory stimulations that cause us to have the theoretical arguments of which we are in possession. Along these lines, empirical idealism would be prone to slip into psychologism, *but not by its very nature or structure*. Given the three criteria, it seems then that idealisms of the *non-empirical* stripe would by their very structure be so prone for the following reasons.

Non-empirical idealisms claim to be either in part or in total a theory or science of logic, because they claim to probate without making recourse to empirically derivable stipulations that whatever is thought is thought in accordance with the "logical functions of judgement" (Kant) or that whatever is thought is thought in accordance with the logical or conceptual requirements of thought "determining itself" in its colligations with other thoughts (Hegel). They also claim to be consonant with what is empirically real (Kant) or with "what objects are in truth" (Hegel), and such a claim of consonance does not permit them to carry *by design* the message of skepticism. Finally, non-empirical idealisms affirm a correlation between the logical and the mental both understood in the broadest of senses. But this correlation is *not naturalistically* construed; rather it is *deductively*[9] construed in either a "transcendental" or "dialectical" manner. Presumably, then, non-empirical idealisms do not reflectively establish naturalistic constraints on their theory construction concerning the correlation between the logical and the mental. In brief, they are not "meta-naturalistic" by design.

Hence it is psychologism's philosophical propensity toward naturalism, its "meta-naturalistic" stance, that criterially sets it apart from non-empirical idealisms. To strongly imply then, as does Dummett, that such idealisms are prone to slipping into psychologism would be to suggest that their view of the logical and the mental as engaging in apperceptively or self-consciously intentional claims about determinate objects is neither sufficiently formal nor sufficiently conceptual for the contents of logic not to be construed naturalistically. The non-empirical grounds, on which intentional claims about determinate objects could be made apperceptively, and on which a correlation between the logical and the mental could be set non-naturalistically, would themselves be a *fatuus ignis*.

Let us now turn our attention to the thoughts of Jakob Fries, Hegel's psychologistically oriented contemporary and critic, and assess his reflections in the light of the foregoing remarks.

## II

Fries' criticisms of Hegel's non-empirical (absolute) idealism stem from his psychologistic understanding and modification of Kant's non-empirical (transcendental) idealism found in the "Transcendental Deduction" of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, specifically in Kant's thesis concerning the unity of apperception and his theory of judgement. As we are well aware, the unity of apperception is the principle of the logical functions of judgements. It is also a non-empirical epistemic principle of experience, which maintains that it must be possible for a subject to designate with cognizance as its own any of its cognitively intentional claims (judgement or thought) about objects. Such claims entail the necessary possibility of being reflectively incorporated with the subject's cognizance of those claims as its own. For Kant an apperceptive subject sets the criterion for a cognitively intentional claim to be such a claim, otherwise there would be nothing of significance for the subject in the claim's reference. And without such significance in the claim's reference, there could not be a cognitively intentional claim at all.

The reason why apperception is construed as a non-empirical condition of experience, according to Kant, is because experience necessarily presupposes reflection. Experience requires that cognitively intentional or transitive claims be made in a manner allowing for an apperceptive regard for such claims. Such a regard, however, is neither separable as an experience nor found in, nor inferred from, nor caused by experience. Any cognitively intentional claim about objects cannot maintain the significance necessary for it to count as an experience of a single subject without the subject engendering that significance and without the subject making that claim in a way enabling it to be reflective of it as its own.

Fries takes strong exception to this position, especially as the unity of apperception undergoes major transformation in the hands of Hegel along the lines of yielding cognitively intentional or transitive claims which do not simply set limits on a capacity of the mind but determine autonomously "what there is

in truth." He interprets the function of the unity of apperception in cognitively intentional claims as blurring the distinction between the immediacy of knowledge and the immediacy of one's awareness of knowledge, because he sees the immediacy of one's cognizance of knowledge as dependent upon reflection and the immediacy of cognition as not so derived. Indeed knowledge is for Fries not an activity involving the principle of apperception, but involving *external stimulation* upon thought. In his work, *System der Metaphysik*, Fries calls understanding a "capacity of stimulable activity"[10], indicating its openness to stimulants contingent and foreign to it, an openness called sensibility. "Sensibility is not a distinct activity alongside a spontaneous apperceptive mode of thought, but the openness of understanding itself to stimulation, the dependence of thought's activity upon external stimulation."[11]

Ironically, Fries shares something in common with Hegel (or for that matter any post-Kantian idealist) regarding an important aspect of Kant's thought. Both reject outright Kant's conception of "forms of sensibility". What this rejection signifies for both is that sensibility itself does not necessarily require for its function in cognitively intentional claims any patent reference to the *non-empirical ideality* of the mind. What this rejection entails, however, is different for each. For Hegel, the necessity of sensibility for cognitively intentional claims is derived *solely* from sensibility's relation to the principle of apperception through the "negative" character of thought. The manner in which a manifold is supplied in sensibility is simply the manner in which it is related to apperception such that it becomes part of the content of the cognitively intentional claim. The manner in which sensibility is related to the principle of apperception is not itself subject to or conditioned by the forms of sensibility.[12] On the other hand, since Fries neither connects the necessary functioning of sensibility in cognition to the principle of apperception nor to space and time *as* forms of sensibility, sensibility's necessary impact on cognition is subject only to naturalistic explanations.

External stimulation upon the understanding is such an explanation for cognition. I cannot here detail Fries' arguments, yet central to his claims is that the contents of logic are not themselves the causal results of such stimulation, but that their *validity* in cognitively intentional claims is to be modelled after the *empirical fact* that it is always a representation laid in consciousness. Their validity is not immediately known in the sense of being apperceptively obtained

in cognitively intentional claims. Rather it is immediately known in the sense of being immediately given or "tacitly felt" in cognition[13], which *subsequently* can stir reflection on cognition. I use here "cognition" rather than "cognitively intentional claim", because for Fries (or anyone for that matter who addresses knowledge naturalistically) immediate knowledge cannot be judgemental (in the Kantian sense) or intentional (even perceptually).

Fries makes this point evident by referring to immediate knowledge as the "feeling for truth"[14], a state, not act, of cognition that reaches clarity, but without guarantee, only when it is given conceptual shape in judgement, which itself is an arbitrary, not rule-governed, combination of concepts. Here immediate knowledge does not exhibit the involvement of logical contents in a cognitive claim and by virtue of which the claim can be about something. For Fries, it is a psychological datum of original certainty requiring no justification and, hence, whose "relation" to or awareness of an object is simply an immediate event of direct sensory acquaintance immune to doubt. Justification of it is unnecessary, indeed begs the question, because it already is the certainty of objective validity, viz., immediate "relation" to its object and the validity of it would have to be presupposed in its justification. Furthermore, its justification would require a comparison of knowledge with its object, a comparison that would be in Fries' view impossible to execute, because the object can only be known via cognition which, due to its immediacy, cannot be presented independently of its object for the sake of the comparison.[15]

It is on the level of judgement or, what Fries calls, "mediate knowledge" that his psychologism comes to view. Judgements *per se* do not carry knowledge for Fries, but they can come to carry it only when they are "connected" to immediate knowledge. Repairing briefly to earlier remarks, immediate knowledge, although bearing for Fries the certainty of objective validity, still requires clarity and articulation, and they can only be acquired promissorily in judgement. Promissory notes of knowledge attach to judgements, because (a) knowledge is not immediately of the structure of judgement, (b) judgements are arbitrary combinations of concepts, and (c) judgements can offer clarity to immediate knowledge. When a judgement provides such clarity, it bears knowledge itself according to Fries, because its combination of concepts is no longer carried out arbitrarily, but in terms of immediate knowledge. A judgement contains knowledge if it is founded upon immediate knowledge which it *reproduces* with

clarity and mediation. Unlike immediate knowledge, such a judgement requires justification in order to show warrant that it is sustained by immediate knowledge. For this reason, the objective validity of "mediate knowledge" or judgement is dependent upon the clarity of or "agreement" with immediate knowledge in the judgement and not upon an immediate "relation" with an object.

But if a judgement is to reproduce immediate knowledge, then the implication is that the structure of judgement in knowledge bears resemblance to the structure of immediate knowledge. That is to say, the logical content employed in cognition is similar to or bears a likeness to the immediate event of direct sensory acquaintance (and *vice versa* although Fries never addresses the converse) despite the signal difference of clarity. Fries' psychologism emerges here, although for Fries immediate knowledge is not the "cause" of the logical content used in cognition. Since a judgement replicates immediate knowledge, however, there is an admission of a naturalistic continuity between the logical content and the immediate state of sensory apprehension.

This would suggest that theoretical arguments of which we are in possession *"represent"* or *resemble* our immediate states of sensory acquaintance, which are the stimuli for seeking clarity of that awareness in judgement. It is only by representing immediate knowledge that a judgement can attempt to establish with clarity epistemic access to mind-independent objects, can satisfy the promptings for assent or the "feeling for truth" intrinsic to immediate knowledge. Since the only discipline capable of examining immediate knowledge would be some strain of empirical psychology, all other disciplines, e.g., logic, examining the structure of judgements, would take a psychologistic direction, because they would be serving to explain experiences in which logical inferences are *de facto* asserted and on which they are *de facto* justified.

What conclusions can be drawn from Fries' position? First and foremost, Fries puts forward a "moderate" brand of psychologism. As a science or theory of logic, Fries' psychologism maintains that logic is simply in the service of psychology and its explanation of immediate knowledge. Nowhere in his writings that I have perused does Fries proffer a more "robust" version of psychologism, in which logical contents are causal products of psychological states or in which logic itself is a discipline whose laws by design are directed toward mental states or sensory experiences. Nevertheless, the "scientific" judgements of Fries' psychologism derive from a non-propositional and non-predicative knowledge.

Second, Fries' psychologism is formulated by design to undo the problem of skepticism, *but on empirical psychological grounds*. It is designed to undo this problem, because it can reflectively endorse naturalistic limits in its framing of theoretical claims about the logical and the mental in its discussion of the cognition of mind-independent objects. For Fries, these limits, however, pertain thematically less to the causal order of nature than to the "psychical mechanism" of the human species in which immediate and mediate knowledge bear a modicum of resemblance. Nonetheless, the theoretical "distance" between nature's causal order and the human species' "psychical mechanism" is for Fries only a stone's throw. It would not be farfetched, then, to claim that Fries' psychologism proximately and for the most part meets the criteria laid out in the previous section. With this in mind, we are now ready to look at Hegel's non-empirical idealism in order to see whether it is secured against any propensity toward psychologism and whether it bears a dyslogistic account of psychologism.

## III

If we are to examine Hegel's position on psychologism, we shall not find much of philosophical importance in his own words. Hegel's remarks concerning psychologism can be characterized in the following manner: terse, pejorative, vitriolic, unsympathetic, wittingly taking no effort, unlike Husserl for example, to understand it. This point can be illustrated most convincingly by citing two passages from his "Introduction" to the *Science of Logic*.

> The additions of psychological, pedagogic, and even physiological material which logic received in the past have subsequently been recognized almost universally as disfigurements. A great part of these psychological, pedagogic, and physiological observations, laws and rules, whether they occur in logic or anywhere else, must appear very shallow and trivial in themselves.[16]

And in a footnote to this passage, Hegel adds the following.

> The latest treatment of this science [logic] which has recently appeared, *System of Logic* by Fries, returns to the anthropological foundations. The idea or opinion on which it is based is so shallow, both in itself and in its execution, that I am spared the trouble of taking any notice of this insignificant publication.[17]

Couple these terse unsympathetic statements concerning Fries' position with his notoriously personal polemic against Fries himself, it thus appears that *prima facie* one cannot find in Hegel a single argument against psychologism, let alone a motive for seriously addressing it. However, once relaxed from his personal phillipics against Fries and his curt dismissal of his theses, I do believe that a cogently reasoned dyslogistic account of psychologism can be developed within Hegel's *Logic* and that Hegel's own discussion of logic and its contents, primarily within that part entitled the "Logic of the Concept", demonstrates a resistance to any proclivity toward psychologism.

Hegel's dyslogistic consideration of psychologism is found in his account of the distinction between *Vorstellung and Gedanke*, i.e., between pictorial-thought and thought. I use "pictorial-thought" as a translation of *Vorstellung*, because Hegel means to convey, as I shall show immediately below, a sense of the mental that is broader and richer than that conveyed by either "representation" or "presentation", which usually carries the sense of an *unconceptualized* private, subjective, psychological item. Unlike a representation or presentation, a pictorial-thought (*Vorstellung*) is itself an interpretive or conceptual scheme whose categories for conceptually determining or interpreting an object obtain their significance and actuality *outside* the scheme. Germane to a pictorial-thought, then, is conceptualization. In contrast, pure thought (*Gedanke)* is an interpretive or conceptual scheme whose categories for conceptually determining an object gather their significance and actuality by their own internal development and comprehensiveness *within* the scheme.

To illustrate this distinction, allow me to give two examples from Hegel.

> Since the various modes of determinacy -- determinacy of feeling, of intuition, of desiring, of volition, etc. -- so far as they are *known*, are generally called *pictorial-thoughts*, it can generally be stated that philosophy puts *thoughts, categories* or, more precisely, *concepts* in the place of pictorial-thoughts. Pictorial-thoughts in general can be regarded as metaphors of thought. As a consequence, however, having pictorial-thoughts does not entail a knowledge...of the significance of thoughts. Conversely, having thoughts and concepts is one thing, knowing what pictorial-thoughts, intuitions and feelings correspond to them is another.[18]

A few lines below, Hegel continues. "...[I]n meditating, reflecting, and applied reasoning, we mix feelings, intuitions, and pictorial-thoughts with thoughts.... It is something totally different, however, to make thoughts themselves, in contact with no other element, the exclusive focus of our concern."[19]

These passages elicit a couple of important points. 1) By calling pictorial-thoughts "metaphors of thought", Hegel is claiming that they liken thoughts to themselves. This is due not only to picture-thoughts' "mixing" of thoughts with elements drawn from domains outside of thought but, more importantly, to pictorial-thoughts' own regard of the "mixing" itself as one with a process of conceptualization.[20] Pictorial-thoughts construe judgements or thoughts as elements whose logical or epistemic connections coincide with what is taken as their source, viz., concatenations established by nature or sensibility or history or society. The relationship of thoughts amongst themselves is laden naturalistically or extralogically and, hence, subject to the mode(s) of "non-logical concatenation" with which it is laden. Pictorial-thoughts in general, then, treat logical colligations of thought as either determined by or borrowing from the naturalistic and extralogical domains into which they are inserted. This is the basis of Hegel's assertion that, outside of these modes of concatenation, the

"internal" colligations of thoughts themselves, which form for Hegel the intelligible condition of both (a) cognitive claims about objects and (b) the determinacy or actuality of such objects, are displaced within pictorial-thoughts' construal. Either thoughts themselves stand "isolated"[21] or their "colligation" is derived non-logically.

2) Moreover, pictorial-thoughts' own reflective posture toward the relationship amongst thoughts or logical contents suggests a kind of conceptualization or formulation of claims whose structure, if propositional and predicative, is derivative of a *naturalistic* account of a specific empirical object-domain. Since pictorial-thoughts affirm the proposition that "nature has given everyone a faculty of thought,"[22] they extend a naturalistic uniformity to thought and its colligation. This signifies that thought and its colligation appear in what is specified as its natural domain according to the account naturalistically continuous with it. The naturalistic account is what is taken as the appropriate science or theory about the domain, and a pictorial-thought takes it as the *presupposition* of any account of the relationship amongst thoughts themselves.

Since the theoretical account about a particular empirical object-domain is an account in which thoughts refer to the items comprising that domain, a pictorial-thought is claiming that the relationship amongst thoughts themselves, including its own conceptualization, presupposes or derives from the account stipulating thoughts' relationship to those items. Pictorial-thoughts, then, can take on a strong *meta-naturalistic* tendency, because they can countenance the view that thought and its colligations are structured and couched exclusively in terms acceptable to inquiries or sciences with naturalistic limits. Hence, a pictorial-thought's own conceptualization, its own relationship amongst thoughts themselves, is dependent upon its selection of an empirical science or theory whose naturalistic account of an empirical object-domain serves as the model for its "colligation" of thoughts.

What is relevant from this brief characterization of pictorial-thoughts is the significant bearing it has on our discussion of psychologism. We defined psychologism above as a science of logic whose theory construction does not support by design the theme of skepticism given its naturalistic endorsement of the continuity of the logical with the mental. As a science of logic, psychologism would have to be concerned with the logical or internal colligation of thoughts or judgements. But it asserts that the logical relationship amongst thoughts

themselves is derivative of or modelled after the psychological relation between the mental states or acts in which thoughts or judgements occur. And since psychologism's theory *construction*, its own colligation of thoughts, presupposes an already extant psychological theory or science, then the "colligation" of thoughts that comprises the coherency of psychologistic theorizing rests upon psychology's account of mental items. So from the foregoing, it is not unreasonable to claim that *psychologism is an instance of pictorial-thought* (although a pictorial-thought is not an instance of psychologism).

If this point holds true, then *Hegel's critique of psychologism is by way of his critique of pictorial-thoughts*. Since a pictorial-thought's reflective posture toward the colligation of thoughts themselves depends upon its selection of an empirical science or theory (in this case, psychology) of a particular object-domain (in this case, mental items), it denies the possibility that the colligation of thoughts and the intrinsic reflection, which necessarily accompanies it, can be discerned or explained independently of the selected empirical theory in which thoughts relate to an empirical object-domain. Such a denial, however, is spurious. The colligation of thoughts *as such* cannot presuppose the domain of nature or empirical objects whose *determinacy or intelligibility necessarily stems from that colligation*. To claim otherwise is to assume that the colligation of thoughts in a theory is accessible to an empirical object-domain independently of that domain's intelligibility stipulated by the colligation of thoughts in the first place. This entails a patent contradiction, because it turns on the incoherence of interpreting the colligation of thoughts, which renders the object-domain intelligible, as an element of the object-domain itself, i.e., an element pertinent to the object-domain in abstraction from that which renders the domain intelligible.

Hegel contends that any theory has itself to be construed as a complex colligation of thoughts whose structure makes it possible for thoughts (a) to relate *non-empirically* to the object-domain of the theory and (b) to be discerned independently of the theory in which thoughts relate to the object-domain. The colligation of thoughts entails (a), because it is the *manner through which an object or object-domain is rendered apriori determinate in thought or judgement*. It entails (b), because it can be the *subject matter of its own discernment, i.e., it is a self-discernment* or, in Hegel's words, thought "being on its own (*bei sich selbst*), relating itself to itself, and having itself for an object."[23]

Hegel's recognition of the distinction between pictorial-thoughts (*Vorstellungen*) and thoughts (*Gedanken*) makes it possible for him to develop a pure logic regarding thoughts, which rules out any examination of thoughts in naturalistic terms. This distinction establishes Hegel's dyslogistic account of pictorial-thoughts and, by implication, all its instances, including psychologism. Thoughts as objective modes of determinacy, as modes in which objects are rendered intelligible, are not to be mistakenly taken as mental items under the sway of naturalistic constraints. Moreover, Hegel's discussion of pictorial-thoughts enables him to subject a wide array of philosophical positions to criticism. Not only Fries, but Kant himself can be described as engaging in pictorial-thought or, more specifically, in psychologism.[24] Be this matter about Kant as it may, I think the wide spectrum pictorial-thoughts cover for Hegel is the basis for his dismissing the claims of Fries' so harshly and abruptly, because his critique of pictorial-thought in general leads him to believe that he does not need to engage in deep and specific criticism of its instances.

Nonetheless, although Hegel's *Logic* distinguishes between pictorial-thoughts and thoughts and bears a dyslogistic account of pictorial-thoughts that extends to psychologism, these two points may not be adequate, as Dummett has strongly implied, to block Hegel's discussion concerning thoughts from succumbing to pictorial-thought, specifically to psychologism. To show that Hegel's discussion is resistant to the tendency of slipping into psychologism would require demonstrating that the structure of thought and its colligation in Hegel's account does not resort to naturalism. Although Dummett himself is neither explicit nor specific as to what would constitute this tendency in the non-empirical idealism of Hegel's *Logic*, I do not believe that one would be off the mark if one identified Hegel's unorthodox yet steadfast claims about thought's "*internal movement*" as the basis for the charge of psychologism, since the "internal" aspect leaves the impression that objective thoughts are part of a subject's inner psychological life and the matter of their "movement" provokes the suspicion that thoughts may not be causally inert.[25]

But the matter of thought's internal movement for Hegel rests not with its origins or foundations, empirical or otherwise, but with its telos.[26] In "The Logic of the Concept", Hegel actually calls thought's internal movement "*development*".[27] Thought's development pertains to the following: "that the cognition that truly comprehends the object is the cognition of it as it is *in and*

*for itself*, and that the Concept [or Notion] is its very objectivity."[28] What is meant here is that any cognitively intentional claim about an object, depending *a priori* on a concept or thought, can determinately employ such a thought only if that thought is subject to its own non-empirical development. For Hegel, this speaks both to the autonomous, self-discerning, and self-determining character of thought in any cognitive claim and to the objectivity of the claim, to what an object is in truth. Moreover, since the objectivity of the claim is identified with the manner in which the object is rendered intelligible or determinate in thought, it too will be dependent on the telos of thought's own development. Although I cannot offer a fuller argument here, the latter point gives flesh to Hegel's view that the objectivity of cognitive claims is assessed in the light of the "deficit"[29] of a thought (negatively) relative to "second" or sequent thoughts, which can redeem that "deficit" by virtue of their development from the deficiency of the antecedent thought and toward comprehensiveness. Thought does not simply conceptually alter, but defines itself as each of its conceptual alterations while regarding them as moments of its own development toward comprehensiveness. So if the objectivity of a cognitively intentional claim is dependent *a priori* on a thought, then it is dependent *a priori* on how comprehensive is the conceptualization that comprises the manner in which the object is rendered intelligible or determinate in the claim.[30]

Admittedly mainstream logicians, who have strong interests in addressing epistemological issues through advances in logic, would certainly regard this, albeit thumbnail, sketch of thought's "internal movement" as a matter unworthy of concern for the discipline of logic. Yet it would be wrong to claim that Hegel did not generally share those interests. For even he criticized the logic of his day for not adequately pursuing those interests and believed that they could be satisfied by reframing that logic along the lines of his non-empirical idealism. Such a reframing, however, neither substitutes for formal logic nor surrenders its own systematic derivations. As Hegel maintains:

> Even if we are to see in logical forms nothing more than formal functions of thought, they would for that very reason be worthy of investigation to ascertain how far, on their account, they correspond to the *truth*. A

> logic that does not perform this task can at most claim the value of a descriptive natural history of the appearances of thought just as they occur.[31]

Yet Hegel's *Logic* does try to clarify the traditional logical typologies of concepts, judgements, and syllogisms as well as the divisions within each, because of what he takes to be the less than adequate treatment of their interrelationships in traditional formal logic. An example of what Hegel claims to be an inadequate treatment of certain logical functions is traditional formal logic's account of predication.[32] Hegel finds credibility in the position that logical typologies and their internal divisions can be construed as moments of thought's "internal movement". Independent of that construal, traditional logical taxonomies and distinctions, Hegel argues, are not tenable for cognitively intentional claims whose objectivity is being established in terms of thought's comprehensiveness. For Hegel, they undo the *a priori* reliance of thought and its function in cognitive claims on thought's "*development*". It is thus tenable to assert that Hegel's attempt to reframe traditional formal logic along the lines of his non-empirical idealism, i.e., to give formal logic "speculative" significance, is motivated by his concern to reinterpret epistemological questions through a "speculatively" idealistic "advance" in logic.

To provide credence to this view and, at the same time, show its immunity to pictorial thought in general and psychologism in particular, allow me to discuss briefly Hegel's account of the syllogism. Thoughts are what they are only by virtue of their operation or work in cognitive claims and not by virtue of some process of abstraction. Since such claims acquire their objectivity in the larger context of thought's development, Hegel contends that this development takes the shape of a systematic colligation of thoughts, i.e., *the logical function of the syllogism*. How cognitive claims determine objects or interpret what objects are in truth cannot be understood if one assesses such determination independent of the "*continuous determination* by which a judgement, through a copula pregnant with content, comes to be a *syllogism*,"...independent of the "continuous determination operating in the judgement and involving...finally the determining of the developed universality of the Concept [Notion]."[33]

Although Hegel discusses the different types of syllogisms and how they are "dialectically" related in the *Logic*, his chief focus, however, is on the syllogistic connection between thought and what objects are in truth. This connection involves the arguments of the "logic of being" and the "logic of essence" with those of the "logic of the concept" in order to show how the syllogism colligates thoughts in a manner coherent with his idealism, a connection whose details cannot be pursued in this essay with the thoroughness they demand. Unlike Kant, who argues for the *immediate* determination of objects by cognitive claims, Hegel contends that such claims determine objects *mediately* in thought colligated syllogistically. Bear in mind that objects are not what they are in truth for Hegel by being thought as they are *in themselves*. Rather objects are what they are in truth by virtue of how they are thought syllogistically in cognitive claims and, hence, subject to "continuous determination" until the comprehensiveness of thought is achieved. Consequently, what objects are in truth does not depend on a thought but on the "speculative" syllogistic scheme of thought itself.

The traditional proofs in syllogistic form are unlike Hegel's syllogistic scheme, because they presuppose unsupported premises and their demonstrations are indifferent to further unsupported premises *ad infinitum*. In Hegel's "speculative" syllogistic scheme, the *telos* of thought cannot be formulated in total indifference to its own *objective fulfillment*; it can be formulated only *in terms of or by means of thought's development*. Thought's telos, development, and fulfillment are given syllogistic form with "speculative" significance. For Hegel, thought's telos serves as the universal rule, because both what an object is in truth and what thought itself is are to be comprehended in the light of this end. Thought's fulfillment of its telos is the conclusion which results from this rule being completely realized. Thought's development is the *condition* to which thought's telos is subject if it is to be fulfilled. It is the "middle term" which colligates thought's telos with thought's realization. Thought's telos, then, can be fulfilled (or be rendered concrete) as the rule expressing universality subject to thought's development. So thought's development warrants the conclusion concerning the realization of thought's telos. It makes possible the mediation between thought's telos and its realization. All told, the syllogistic colligation of thought's telos, development, and fulfillment reveals the structure of thought's internal movement as *self-determining*.[34]

It is along this syllogistic line that truth or, what I would here call, intelligibility is for Hegel the "agreement of thought or the Notion with itself", in which "second" thoughts and their antecedents agree with themselves in thought developing toward comprehensive fulfillment. What objects are in truth is dependent upon thought's syllogistically mediated developmental criteria such that what is in truth relative to one moment in thought's development turns out not to be in truth relative to another. Nonetheless, both are indeed in truth, because both moments of thought, in which objects are rendered determinate, are necessarily mediated in thought's syllogistic development toward fulfillment. Yet, ultimately the fulfillment of thought's telos through its developing comprehensiveness entails a reflective apperception or self-consciousness within thought about itself which establishes the autonomy of thought's syllogistically mediated colligation while serving simultaneously as the logical character of the epistemic enterprises of a cognitive subject. Hegel's discussion of this matter occurs in the "Absolute Idea". Without going into any detail, here Hegel contends that the syllogistic scheme providing for the continuous determination of what objects are in truth cannot itself account for how that scheme can be the scheme that it is without simultaneously showing how the continuity of determination, thought's development, can itself be comprehended in thought's fulfillment. Thought's continuous determination of what objects are in truth through cognitive claims is at the same time thought's *self-determination* in such claims. Thought's own comprehension of its own development and its own relation to what objects are in truth are thought's apperceptive awareness, "the Notion's [thought's] own reflection"[35], about thought's "internal movement". Hegel takes this route to show that thought's comprehension of its syllogistically shaped development does not rely or draw upon anything "extralogical", but on the self-determining character of thought itself. And given his interest in exploring epistemological issues through "advances" in logic, Hegel's *Logic* views thought as defining for itself the idealistically yet non-empirically framed logical conditions or limits under which any apperceptive subject must think to think with objectivity at all.

## IV

It would be absurd to maintain that Hegel's "Logic of the Concept" does not come with dilemmas and problems as my synopsis seems to suggest. Allow me to cite with affirmation the astute observation of Robert Pippin concerning the major dilemma of Hegel's position in the *Logic*.

> Either Hegel's claim about the final comprehension of Notionality [thought] itself is justified by the determinate negations of prior, insufficiently comprehended Notions [thoughts], in which case we are committed to a highly implausible view of determinate negation and one that does not usually match what goes on in the text, or Hegel's claims about determinate negations are themselves justified by an implicit (or 'in itself') assumption about thought's final self-understanding, in which case it is unclear why *that* version of thought's completion is the correct one, since it certainly cannot be defended by appeal to the transitions articulated by reference to it.[36]

Indeed this dilemma of Hegel's *Logic* cannot be pursued with adequacy here. But I raise it for the simple reason that it emerges *only* in the context of understanding Hegel's "logical investigations" as thought's examination of the "speculatively" logical or conceptual requirements of determining itself as well as objects in their truth in its colligation with other thoughts. Yet, since thought is to comprehend its own continuous determination or comprehensiveness, its own "internal movement", as syllogistically mediated, there cannot be any recourse to arguments forging or endorsing the structure of thought in empirical, naturalistic, or extraconceptual terms. Even if Hegel's project turns out to be a failure, construing thought in terms of that project renders it impossible to regard Hegel's *Logic* as a psychologistic treatment of thought.

Nonetheless, we can still ponder briefly how Hegel's dyslogistic account of psychologism and non-psychologistic treatment of logic fares in the light of Frege's and Husserl's. As we know, both Frege and Husserl employ the *Vorstellung/Gedanke-Sinn* distinction as the basis of their dyslogistic consideration of psychologism and their claims affirming the objectivity of thought and meaning. Indeed all three understand *Vorstellung* in different ways. Whereas *Vorstellung* is a non-intentional, private, sensory mental item for Frege, it carries an intentional dimension for Husserl which, nevertheless, sustains the distinction between *Vorstellung* and *Sinn* even if an intentionalized *Vorstellung* does not provide an adequate basis for a *theory* of meaning as Husserl soon came to recognize. As we have seen above, *Vorstellung* is for Hegel any theory or interpretive scheme of thoughts or meanings whose logical connections are construed as having been derived from or validated by naturalistic concatenations. One such theory would be psychologism. Clearly Frege's conception of *Vorstellung* does not lean in this Hegelian direction. His disparagement of psychologism is due to its making logical contents *Vorstellungen*, and Frege sees nothing like a coherent interpretive scheme in it. Although Husserl does not call it *Vorstellung*, he does not rule out psychologism as a theory in the Hegelian manner described.

Their respective views on *Vorstellung* and psychologism have an effect on their respective views on *Gedanke* and *Sinn*. All three would regard thoughts and meanings as objective, public, non-empirical contents of logic. Yet the extent to which such contents could be framed in an idealistic context varies for each. As Mohanty has perceptively shown[37], Frege had a very weak conception of subjectivity which made it difficult for him to give an adequate account of how thoughts were "grasped" in a non-empirically *idealistic* manner despite his attempts at such an account. It may be that this weak conception enabled him simply to revamp traditional predication theory rather than to offer a "speculative" (Hegel) or a phenomenological (Husserl) rationale of the basic categories and principles of organization and division of traditional formal logic, both of which come with a conception of subjectivity tied to a robust non-empirical idealism.

In this brief synopsis, then, Hegel, like Husserl, subscribes to the view that psychologism is an interpretive scheme and not just a making of logical contents into *Vorstellungen* in the Fregean sense. Moreover, Hegel, like Husserl, proceeds

to offer strong non-empirically idealistic rationales of the basic principles of formal logic, because they both are concerned with reinterpreting epistemological questions through an idealistic advance in logic. I believe that these issues reveal a common philosophical agenda between them that has not been given its proper attention. I shall not explore this agenda here, but I want to pose a few questions in concluding this essay to indicate at least those points in which a lengthy meditation on Hegel and Husserl would be philosophically fruitful.

(1) Since both Hegel and Husserl regard their respective "pure logic" as a critical response to psychologism, why does Husserl's "pure logic" require a phenomenological grounding and Hegel's does not? Or why Husserl's transcendental logic in his later years requires a phenomenology of perception (Husserl's transcendental aesthetic) in order to provide the non-empirically idealistic rationale of the principles of formal logic and Hegel's does not? Or why does Husserl's non-empirically idealistic clarification of the principles of formal logic require some kind of intuitive warrant and Hegel's does not?

(2) If Husserl is concerned with the non-empirically idealistic manner in which objects are meant and Hegel is concerned with the non-empirically idealistic manner in which objects are rendered determinate, then is there any connection between Husserl's theory of meaning and Hegel's theory of determinacy?[38]

(3) If so, what advantage is to be had by Husserl with a "dialectic" of sense operating at the level of perception and not at the level of thought or language in contrast to Hegel's "dialectic" operating syllogistically in thought?

(4) Given (1), (2) and (3), what is the difference between Hegel's and Husserl's claims regarding the connection between rationality and actuality?

My pursuit of such questions and of the topic of this essay has been motivated by the work of J.N. Mohanty. Although he has not offered anything in the way of an extensive examination of Hegel and Husserl, I have nonetheless learned volumes from his rich interpretations of the relation between them when he provides brief encounters of their views in his work. The pursuit has been lengthy and often not straight, but Mohanty has laid down signposts which have shortened the pursuit and have provided insights to keep me on track. For that and for much more, I say "thank you."

# NOTES

1. Cf. Michael Dummett, *Frege: The Philosophy of Language* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 684.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Cf. Michael Dummett, "Gottlob Frege" in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* vol. 4, ed., Paul Edwards (New York, MacMillan Publishers, 1967), p. 225.

4. I draw this claim from Kenley Dove's article "Die Epochē der Phänomenologie des Geistes" in *Hegel-Studien,* Beiheft XI (Bonn: Bouvier, 1973), pp. 605-621.

5. The italicized phrase *Logic* will refer to both Hegel's *Science of Logic* and his *Logic: Part One of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences (1830)* unless specified otherwise.

6. It is for this reason that Husserl referred to psychologism as "logical psychologism".

7. I distinguish the "non-empirical contents of logic" from "non-natural objects" because, unlike the latter, the former are not objects of reference but, from the vantage point of non-empirical idealisms, mannners in which objects are rendered determinate or vehicles of reference. Only under some form of *non-empirical realism* would the two be type-identical objects ontologically. Under psychologism, the two would be type-identical objects methodologically. Under non-empirical idealisms, the two are not type-identical either methodologically or ontologically. A contemporary representative text on this matter and subscribing to a non-empirical realism would be Jerrold Katz's *The Metaphysics of Meaning* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990). A contemporary representative text subscribing to a psychologistic position would be Jack Meiland's "Psychologism in Logic: Husserl's Critique" in *Inquiry*, vol. 19, (1976), pp. 325-339. A contemporary representative text subscribing to a non-empirical idealism would be J.N. Mohanty's *Husserl and Frege* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

8. Cf. W.V.O. Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized" in *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 69-90. In his essay "Ontological Relativity" published in the abovementioned volume, Quine refers to naturalism as the thesis that "knowledge, mind, and meaning are part of the same world that they have to do with, and that they are to be studied in the same empirical spirit that animates natural science. There is no place for a prior philosophy."

9. By "deduction" I do not mean an argument whose premises claim to offer irrefragable grounds for the truth of its conclusion through syllogistic proof. In non-empirical idealisms, "deduction" signifies an argument which justifies a claim concerning the *de jure* legitimacy of the entitlement and employment of *apriori* concepts or *categories* in cognitively intentional claims. In this idealistic context, deductions are proofs whose results can be obtained by means of syllogisms but, nonetheless, assume by design a *juridical*, not syllogistic, structure of argumentation. On this point, especially as it pertains

to Kant, see Dieter Henrich's "Kant's Notion of a Deduction and the Methodological Background of the First *Critique*" in *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*, ed. Eckard Förster, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp. 29-46. When we turn to "deduction" in Hegel, matters are more difficult to ascertain. Although I cannot argue here, I would still maintain that "deduction" in Hegel still carries the abovementioned signification pertinent to non-empirical idealisms. However, "deduction" in Hegel can be founded upon a syllogistic structure of argumentation, but not in the sense of syllogism defined above.

10. Jakob Fries, *System der Metaphysik*, (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1967), p. 107.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

12. Since sensibility is defined by its relation to the principle of apperception, the distinction between appearance and thing in itself would also be defined in terms of that relation. Furthermore, since the forms of sensibility are what establish this distinction *ontologically* for Kant, Hegel would establish this distinction ontologically by virtue of complex and modifiable conceptual requirements in the manner in which appearance and thing in itself are each thought by an apperceptive subject. For further discussion of this matter, see my "Apperception and Combination: Some Kantian Problems" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. xlix, No. 3, March 1989, pp. 451-53.

13. For an excellent discussion of the importance for maintaining the distinction between the immediacy of knowledge and the immediacy of givenness in epistemology, see Gerold Prauss', *Einführung in die Erkenntnistheorie*, (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), especially pp. 56-65.

14. *System der Metaphysik, loc. cit.*, p. 108.

15. For those acquainted with Hegel's presentation of the third argument of "Sense Certainty" in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Fries' discussion rings quite familiar.

16. G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller, (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), p. 52.

17. *Ibid.* The reference to "anthropological foundations" signals Fries' belief that the validity of judgements does not arise from the "speculative" reconstruction of thought, but from the "psychical mechanism" of the human species in which the validity of judgements is established by relation to immediate knowledge.

18. G.W.F. Hegel, *Logic: Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. W. Wallace, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), § 3, p. 6. Since the translation is mine, one can see *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften (1830)*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970), § 3, p. 44.

19. *Ibid.* (My translation).

20. A contemporary example of pictorial-thought would be the following claim made by John Searle against critics of mental states and intentional contents in a chapter entitled "Are Meanings in the Head?": "Some form of internalism must be right because there isn't anything else to do the job. The brain is all we have for the purpose of representing the world to ourselves and everything we can use must be inside the brain." It is clear that Searle would treat the internal character of thoughts in terms of a kind of biological naturalism. See his *Intentionality*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 230.

21. *Ibid.*, § 20, p. 30; p. 73 in the German edition.

22. *Ibid.*, § 5, p. 7; p. 46 in the German edition.

23. *Ibid.*, § 28, p. 49; p. 95 in the German edition.

24. Indeed, in Kant's case, one could argue from this vantage point that the use of the forms of sensibility to provide objective reality to the categories is a way of defining in advance that concepts can be legitimately applied only to the domain of nature and of blocking in advance that concepts or thoughts can be without extraconceptual support in acquiring objective reality. In Hegel's words, "the Kantian philosophy has not got beyond the psychological reflex of the Notion and has reverted once more to the assertion that the Notion is permanently conditioned by a manifold of intuition." See his *Science of Logic*, p. 589.

25. See note 20.

26. In what follows in the remainder of this section, I am indebted to Robert B. Pippin's excellent book, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), especially pp. 232-260.

27. *Logic: Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, loc. cit.*, § 161, p. 224; p. 308 in the German edition. In this essay I shall simply assume and not discuss the other two functions that comprise thought's "internal movement", viz., transition (*Übergehen*) into the other in the "Logic of Being" and reflective show (*Scheinen*) in the other in the "Logic of Essence".

28. *Science of Logic, loc. cit.*, p. 590.

29. I use the term "deficit" to name the insufficiency of comprehensiveness in a thought's manner of rendering an object intelligible relative to other thoughts.

30. Unlike "objectivity" in Kant's non-empirical (transcendental) idealism, where "objectivity" signifies the capacity of judgements or thoughts to be either true or false, "objectivity" in Hegel's non-empirical (absolute or speculative) idealism signifies the capacity of judgements or thoughts to be comprehensive. Whereas Kant's "transcendental logic" does affirm bi-valence, Hegel's does not.

31. *Science of Logic, loc. cit.*, p. 595.

32. For a good discussion of Hegel's criticisms of traditional predication theory, see Terry Pinkard's *Hegel's Dialectic: The Explanation of Possibility*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), pp. 74-80.

33. *Logic: Part One of The Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, loc. cit.*, § 171, p. 235; p. 321 in the German edition.

34. Cf. Klaus Düsing, "Syllogistik und Dialektik in Hegels spekulative Logik" in *Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik: Formation und Rekonstruktion*, ed. D. Henrich, (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1986), pp. 15-38.

35. *Science of Logic, loc. cit.*, p. 833.

36. *Hegel's Idealism, loc. cit.*, p. 256.

37. *Husserl and Frege, loc. cit.*, pp. 25-40.

38. For a discussion of Hegel's theory of determinacy in terms of a theory of meaning, see Hans Friedrich Fulda's "Unzulängliche Bemerkungen zur Dialektik" in *Seminar: Dialektik in der Philosophie Hegels*, ed., R.-P. Horstmann, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978), pp. 33-69.

# THE INFLUENCE OF PHENOMENOLOGY ON J.N. MOHANTY'S UNDERSTANDING OF 'CONSCIOUSNESS' IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

**Anindita Niyogi Balslev**

J.N. Mohanty is one of those rare scholars who are cosmopolitan in a true sense. He is not only at home in the field of Indian philosophy, a creation of his native cultural soil, but also in Western philosophy, crossing with equal facility the so-called boundaries of the analytical and continental traditions. His deep engagement in the philosophical thinking of both India and the West marks him as an erudite scholar and shows that the geographical demarcations of human thinking (such as "German Idealism" and "American Pragmatism") need not be taken as territories where only a native can have a proper access and others can contemplate only from outside.

It may be perhaps said without hesitation that if Mohanty has taken great pains to go through the original works of such great Western thinkers as Hegel or Kant, it is the works of Edmund Husserl which have exerted the most profound influence on him. If Husserl has found a most welcome entry to the Indian mind, Mohanty will be remembered as having played a major role on mediating that influence. The impact on Husserl's phenomenological thinking is evident, as will be seen in what follows, even on Mohanty's understanding and treatment of the traditional concerns of Indian philosophy of which he has direct knowledge through many years of assiduous studies with Indian pundits. His forthcoming book on Indian philosophy[1] bears the unmistakable stamp of the phenomenologist that Mohanty primarily is. His deep appreciation of the German philosopher has led to the production of a considerable number of books and innumerable papers. An evaluation of this scholarly enterprise, however, is not the concern of this paper. What is of significance here is to discern exactly what kind of an influence Husserl's thought can be said to have on a scholar who seeks to understand another philosophical tradition which is not *prima facie* phenomenological. One



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 245–253.

would like to ask, whether Husserl can be taken as a philosopher who could supply us with a conceptual apparatus for understanding the "other", for overcoming a pernicious form of cultural relativism which claims that having divergent intellectual histories leads to closed conceptual worlds among which no communication is possible?

In his keynote address to the conference on "Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy"[2], Mohanty precisely answers that question in the affirmative. He maintains that whereas thoughts of great philosophers like Aristotle and Kant present to posterity "an unending philological and philosophical task" of interpreting their texts, "there are others, also admittedly great philosophers, whose work releases you to go to your own way, whose demand upon you is not to interpret their texts but *to follow a path* laid down, in an exemplary manner, in their writings. Husserl is such a philosopher." If this is so, it calls for a careful observation of how Mohanty, who describes himself as a "Husserlian of a sort", follows this "path" in his presentation, interpretation and critique of the traditional concerns of Indian philosophy. This is obviously not a matter of a simple exploration of similarities and differences between phenomenology and Indian philosophy. For, as Mohanty claims, "what the Husserlian mode of thinking provides us with is not an effective tool for doing what is called 'comparative philosophy', but rather for understanding the other's point of view as a noematic structure, and then to go behind it in order to lay bare the experiential phenomenon that is embodied in that structure."[3] In this connection, Mohanty has made an important contribution, discussing in several papers how to overcome relativism using the very tool of phenomenology.[4] But this is not the place to go into the details of this issue.

Now we come to the central question of this paper; in what way has Mohanty been guided by phenomenology in his understanding and research about "consciousness" in Indian philosophy? India has an ancient and unbroken tradition of philosophical thinking covering a wide spectrum of issues relevant for a study of the nature of consciousness. Notwithstanding the divergent tasks regarding this large problem that diverse schools of Indian thought have undertaken, Mohanty is especially interested in those issues regarding "consciousness" in Indian philosophy, which overlap with his phenomenological concerns. Here I will discuss briefly, as examples, three such questions, stemming from phenomenology, which he asks as he investigates into the problem in the Indian context.

These questions are: 1) Is consciousness intentional? 2) Is consciousness temporal? and 3) Is consciousness constitutive?

## I

If one asks Mohanty -- Is it possible for him to study consciousness in the context of Indian philosophy without explicitly using the concepts of phenomenology?-- his answer will be, I believe, that "consciousness" is the only theme which cannot be adequately thought about without the phenomenological method. There are also two other philosophical methods one could apply: conceptual analysis and metaphysics. Conceptual analysis of "consciousness" presupposes a concept of consciousness which, in turn, must be derived from how I experience my consciousness. But then that puts us back in phenomenology. The metaphysics of consciousness claims to go beyond what is a possible datum of experience, and Mohanty would consider that illegitimate. For example, the idea of a consciousness which is not intentional (*nirvisaya*), which does not belong to an ego (*nirāśraya*), is not acceptable to him since it is not phenomenologically given. Consequently, he insists, one would not know how any talk about it could be legitimated.

Thus, for Mohanty, any study of consciousness must, in the long run, rest upon our experience of consciousness, and in this sense at least must be subject to the phenomenological method.

The issue whether consciousness is always consciousness of an object or not has been a matter of endless polemic in the Indian philosophical tradition. Mohanty's sympathy obviously lies more with Ramanuja, the Visistadvaitin. Ramanuja clearly rejects the Advaita theory of a non-intentional consciousness, and while accepting that consciousness is self-evidencing, defines this self-evidencing feature (*svayamprakāśatva*) in the following way -- consciousness is self-evidencing *only when* it reveals its object to its owner (*svaśrayamprati visayaprakāśana-velayameva*). For Ramanuja and Mohanty, the intentionality of consciousness and its self-evidencing, reflexive character go together. This is certainly the case for Sartre, although it is not so clear if the relation between the two features is as intimate from Husserl's view. In his book *The Concept of Intentionality*, Mohanty develops a complicated thesis regarding degrees of

intentionality and degrees of reflexivity by tying the two features together. But for my present purposes, I need not go into that theory.

Mohanty's critique of the Advaita theory of consciousness typically brings out the difficulties that the Advaita thesis presents to a phenomenologist.[5] There are three vital points about Advaita Vedānta which Mohanty subjects to careful analysis.

The first is its concept of non-intentional consciousness. There are three possible ways Advaita Vedānta may be said to support this concept: (i) by drawing support from mystical (*turīya*) experience, (ii) by tracing the idea to the *śruti*, i.e., to *śabdapramāna*, and (iii) by an argument that if consciousness as such cannot be abstracted, for example, from consciousness of a jar (*ghata-jñāna*) etc., how could one distinguish consciousness of a jar from consciousness of a piece of cloth (*pata-jñāna*)?

As for (i), Mohanty's simple answer seems to be that since he has no access to mystical experience, he cannot decide what its testimony is. As for (ii), he does not think that *śruti* by itself bears out the thesis of non-intentionality; for that purpose, a certain interpretation of *śruti* is called for. Other schools of the Vedāntic tradition, as is well known, have drawn on the *śruti* precisely to support their thesis that consciousness is intentional. In other words, according to Mohanty, one has to grant a certain plasticity of meaning to the *śruti* which allows for different interpretations.

As for (iii), namely, the argument that through abstraction the idea of consciousness as such can be derived from the concrete instances such as consciousness of a jar and consciousness of a piece of cloth, Mohanty replies that such abstraction only yields an abstract universal and nothing more. Such an abstract universal "consciousness as such" exemplified in instances of consciousness (which themselves are *of* something or other) would have the same status as "redness" instantiated in different patches of red. This abstract universal "consciousness as such" hardly deserves to be regarded as the *real*, it is rather sustained only by an act of abstraction.

The second point about Advaita Vedānta that Mohanty scrutinizes is its thesis that non-intentional consciousness is the Reality behind all things. Mohanty's view seems to be that the only way this thesis can be understood is to construe it not as an ontological thesis, but rather as a valuational thesis. In other words, what the thesis really expresses is a *demand* that, only if consciousness can give

up its intentionality, then it would be, so to speak, at peace with itself (*sāntimadhigacchati*) and that would be the most desirable form of self-experience.

The third point about Advaita Vedānta that Mohanty criticizes is its thesis that all things, all objective experience, is an appearance of this consciousness or Reality. In addressing this point, it may be asked whether or not the Advaita notion of "*adhyāsa*", which is used to support the abovementioned thesis, can be construed as "constitution" in the phenomenological sense. I tried to show in my paper for the Delhi conference referred to earlier that the construal of "*adhyāsa*" as superimposition (of one thing on another) makes sense only *within* the context of mundaneity. However, when the issue is how mundaneity itself is possible, *adhyāsa* could be interpreted as constitution in the sense of Husserlian phenomenology.[6] While appreciating this interpretive possibility, Mohanty would add that the idea of constitution requires for its support a theory of *constituting* consciousness that is intentional and whose foundation again cannot be a non-intentional consciousness. (For more, see Sec. III below).

Mohanty's critique of Advaita Vedānta, the manner in which he questions the basic tenets of its philosophical understanding of consciousness, unequivocally bears the stamp of his phenomenological training. Yet it helps to clarify an important point in the philosophical vocabulary regarding expressions which are often used ambiguously in describing the variegated views of consciousness in Indian philosophy. The usages of such designations as "pure consciousness" and "transcendental consciousness" often appear in the Indian philosophical literature concerning "consciousness" without the necessary precision. Mohanty rightly insists on the distinction between the two concepts and recommends definite and careful use of these two notions. He scans the diverse views on "consciousness" and maintains that the idea of pure consciousness is very much present in Indian philosophy. By "pure" he means the idea of non-intentional consciousness. He argues that pure consciousness in this sense cannot also be called "transcendental", either in the Kantian sense (i.e. as the non-empirical ground of the possibility of any empirical consciousness) or in the Husserlian sense of being the constitutive source of all objectivities, and so of all mundaneity. On Mohanty's view, "pure consciousness" in the Indian philosophies is self-evidencing (*svayamprakāśa*) and is the witness (*sākṣī*) of all objectivities, but is *not* the constitutive source. For this latter function, Advaita brings in *Avidyā* or

Ignorance. The use of the adjective "transcendental", then, in the context of Advaita pure consciousness is misleading.

## II

If the theme of time and consciousness has been in the focus of contemporary western thought, the phenomenological movement has most certainly played a key role in the investigation of it.

In this context, it may be observed that perhaps the least understood of all the concepts of Indian philosophy in an intercultural context is that of time. Even today one comes across authors who, using the metaphor of circle, assert the cliché that Indian thought is dominated by a cyclic view of time. The implications that are read into it are also stereotyped, which are hardly consistent with the spirit of Indian thought.[7]

It can be stated unhesitatingly that the theme of time and consciousness has been a major preoccupation of Indian philosophical thought for centuries. Yet many important aspects of this theme remain to be explored. There are clearly realistic and idealistic trends in the Indian philosophical thinking concerning time, which has obvious parallels in the history of Western philosophy. What remains to be investigated is any trend that can be interpreted as being akin to the phenomenological analysis of time-consciousness.

Cognizant of the variety of views about time found in Indian thought, Mohanty thinks that "suitable interpretation and construction of some of these views may generate perceptions of time like those of a James, a Husserl or a Heidegger."[8]

There is no doubt that the idea of "instant" or "*ksana*" has found most divergent treatments in Indian thought. Within the Brahmanical tradition itself, the Vaisesika and the Yoga schools have given profoundly different views regarding the "instant". Even the Jainas hold a position quite dissimilar to both the views just mentioned. The Buddhist view of the "instant" is clearly a radical departure from the ideas found in the Brahmanical or in the Jaina traditions. How these views differ from each other and what is their impact on a theory of consciousness make for a fascinating study. I have discussed some of these questions elsewhere.[9] Reviewing these positions, Mohanty asks an important question which is directly relevant for this paper:

> What conception of the unit of time and so of '*ksana*' is sanctioned by the testimony of phenomenological experience of consciousness? Is it possible that the Yoga *ksana* or, for that matter, the Buddhist instant was not the smallest indivisible part of the objective present, but rather the experientally further indivisible living present, within which the dimensions of objective past and present and future have their 'origin'?[10]

It will indeed be worthwhile to explore such interpretive possibilities, not merely in order to venture at an interesting comparative philosophy but also to gain a deeper understanding of those views within the context of Indian thought itself. I look forward to Mohanty's findings on these and allied issues in the years to come.

## III

To the question, is there any notion of "constitution" to be found in Indian philosophy, Mohanty has serious doubts. His observation is that there is no idea of constitution in the Indian philosophical tradition. Although he would not entirely rule out the possibility that Advaita Vedānta can be given a phenomenological reading, he would insist that, given the way it is traditionally understood, it is to be considered as a *metaphysical* thesis, because it removes from our experience of consciousness one of its pervasive features, i.e., intentionality. What remains is an abstraction which is then posited as the original reality of things. Obviously, a non-intentional consciousness cannot constitute.

In my view, Advaita Vedānta is not a mere metaphysics of consciousness. It is indeed possible, as I have shown elsewhere,[11] to interpret the thesis of *adhyāsa* as a theory of constitution, and so as an incipient transcendental phenomenology.

On Mohanty's view, as I understand it, phenomenological constitution is constitution of *sense* (and *not* of things). As he has argued on various occasions, since Indian philosophy does not have a theory of sense as distinguished from

reference, it cannot have a genuine theory of constitution. At one extreme, it has a theory of consciousness as the ground of all evidencing; at the other end, it has a theory of all things as created by consciousness. The idea of constitution, situated as it is between these two possibilities, remains precariously out of view.

However, it seems to me that since the Advaita-Mîmāmsā theory regards the meaning as a universal distinguished from the particular serving as an instantiation of that universal, its conceptualism makes room for a *certain* theory of sense, and so for *some* theory of constitution.

Before concluding this short paper, I would like to observe that if the influence of phenomenology is evident in Mohanty's study of "consciousness" in Indian philosophy, this does not amount to saying that his presentation of the views of the different schools of Indian thought is in any way a distortion or a misrepresentation. In fact, I believe that he has rendered an immensely valuable service by bringing forth the philosophical traditions of East and West closer to one another without violating the spirit of either. In fact, it may perhaps be said that just as his philosophical skill, sense of precision, and long training in the philosophies of both India and the West make Indian philosophy a lucid reading for a curious westerner, his critique of such trends of Indian thought as Advaita Vedānta would challenge and stimulate Indian philosophers to rethink the issues of their philosophical tradition and engage in a fruitful debate.

## NOTES

1. *Reason in Indian Thought* (forthcoming from Oxford University Press). I had occasions to read parts of this manuscript.

2. This conference was co-sponsored by the *Indian Council for Philosophical Research*, and was held in New Delhi, in January 1988.

3. J.N. Mohanty, "Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy: The Concept of Rationality" in *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, Vol. 19, No. 3, October 1988, pp. 269-70.

4. J.N. Mohanty, "Phenomenology and The Overcoming of Relativism" in *Relativism*, ed. by M. Krausz, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), (forthcoming).

5. Cf. J.N. Mohanty, "Consciousness in Vedānta" in S.S. Rama Rao Pappu (ed.), *Perspective on Vedānta*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), pp. 8-17.

6. Cf. my paper "Analysis of I-consciousness in Transcendental Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy" presented at the Delhi conference.

7. Cf. my *A Study of Time in Indian Philosophy*, (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983).

8. Cf. Mohanty's review of my book (see note 7 above) in *Philosophy East and West*, XXXVII, 1987, pp. 455-56.

9. Cf. my "Time, Self and Consciousness: Some Conceptual Patterns in the Context of Indian Thought", *Journal of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, 5, 1987, pp. 111-119.

10. See note 8.

11. See note 6.

# MOHANTY ON ŚABDA PRAMĀNA

**Sibajiban Bhattacharyya**

J.N. Mohanty has written extensively on various aspects of *śabda pramāna* in different systems of Indian philosophy. I shall attempt here an examination of some aspects of Mohanty's interpretation of the concept of *śabda pramāna*. I shall concentrate on his more recent writings, especially "A Critique of the Theory of Śabdapramāna and the Concept of Tradition", which was Mohanty's contribution to a seminar in Oxford in 1987, and refer to the three lectures which he delivered in the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture at Golpark in Calcutta during July and August 1988. As none of the material has yet been published, I shall quote extensively from the first paper.

## Mohanty's Arguments

Allow me to cite huge portions of the abovementioned essay by Mohanty to display what I believe are key elements in his discussion of *śabda pramāna*.

(1) "I still believe that the distinction between understanding a sentence 'p' and knowing that p is fundamental and cannot be flouted. But this distinction by itself, I now concede, does not entail that *śabda* cannot be a *pramāna*. I want to ask, to begin with: when and under what conditions does understanding the sentence 'p' uttered by a speaker amount on the part of the hearer to knowing that p."[1]

(2) "The point I am making is that in the case of *laukika śabda*, [i.e.] referring to perceptible objects, its knowledge-giving function is parasitical upon perception and inference and is not an independent one. So when we are reminded, rightly I think, [that] an enormous amount of knowledge we possess



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 255–268.

derives from reading books and newspapers amongst other [things] and [from] hearing [what] others taken to be competent say, [we cannot use those facts] to prove that *śabda* is a *pramāna*. In all such cases, we are said to know only inasmuch as the possibility of perceptual confirmation or inferential backing is taken for granted.[2]

"Is the view that we do not have a *śabdabodha* of a false sentence (but only a peculiar mental [*manasa*] state really) counter-intuitive? One may reply that it would be so, *only if* we construe *śabdabodha* as linguistic understanding. It is counter-intuitive to say that we do not understand the meaning of a false sentence. But the view is *not* counter-intuitive, if by "*śabda-bodha*" is meant linguistic *knowledge*: we surely cannot be said to know, when the sentence heard is false. As a response to this challenge, let me take it as uncontroversial: (a) that we do understand false sentences, but (b) do not have a *knowledge* upon hearing and understanding such a sentence. (a) entails a theory of understanding which the Indian theories do not have. (b) leaves the basic theory of *śabda-bodha* intact: *śabda-bodha* is intrinsically *pramā* (at least, with regard to *utpatti*, if not with regard to *jñāpti*, i.e., it *is* true, to begin with, even if it is not known to be so)."[3]

(3) "To turn now to the other point, viz., that *śabda* produces knowledge only when it is uttered by a competent speaker. Apart from the question [whether] the competency of the speaker must also be known, we need to ask the following question. Suppose the hearer believes the speaker to be competent, and so *knows* that p upon hearing 'p' being uttered. Suppose also that later on he finds out the speaker was not competent. He still understands the sentence 'p', although he cannot any longer be said to know that p. What sort of understanding is this, that falls short of knowing? To put it in other words, is there *śabdabodha* only when the speaker is in fact competent? Does the linguistic understanding change when the speaker, at first taken to be competent, is found not to be so? Many Navya-Nyāya authors tend to hold the view that when the speaker is not competent and the sentence is false, there is no *śabdabodha*. What *seems* to be a *śabdabodha* is some other peculiar mental state. This is an unsatisfactory position: first, it *defines śabdabodha* as *pramā*, so that a false *śabdabodha* is being ruled out by definition. Secondly, it is denying a distinction that obtains in the case of other *pramānas*. In the case of perception, an erroneous perception is still *pratyaksa*.

In the case of *anumiti*, if one ascertains the presence of a defective *hetu*, the *anumiti* is stopped -- not [as] a consequence of the definition of "*anumiti*" but as a matter of psychological fact. In the present case of *śabdabodha*, however, although one understands fully well a false sentence, and even if this understanding is of a true sentence, one is *śabdabodha*, the other is not."[4]

(4) "*Śabda*, then, in this domain, is not an independent *pramāna*. In the case of supersensible realities -- such as God or soul -- I will defend a similar thesis: *śabda* can generate belief, very strong belief as a matter of fact, but not [a] claim to know unless and until some other *pramāna* is brought in support, either inference or some mode of supersensible perception if permissible."[5]

After showing that *śabda* cannot give us any knowledge either of empirical or non-empirical objects, Mohanty then explains in what sense *śabda* can be a source of knowledge.

(5) "The thesis that I wish to defend is this: *śabda* alone gives us knowledge of moral rules, of what one ought to or ought not to do, of *vidhi* and *nisedha*. I am not only saying that ought-sentences cannot be derived from is-sentences (so that perception and inferences are incapable of yielding knowledge of moral rules), but much more. I am *not* saying that what one ought to do, [let us call it Ø], follows from the fact that S (who is a competent speaker) says one ought to do Ø; for to say that would be to say that moral rules are inferred from the fact that someone has uttered sentences stating those rules. What I am rather saying is that we learn the rules only from *hearing/reading* verbal instructions. There is no other means of knowing them."[6]

Next Mohanty clarifies the concept of *apauruseyatva* of the *śruti* texts.

(6) "It is for me too literal an understanding of the thesis of *apauruseyatva* of *śruti* to construe it as meaning that the texts are simply not composed by any human author at all, or even that they are not composed at all. It is also totally muddled -- and betrays an insensitiveness to the nature of Hindu thought -- to say that the *śruti* is *apauruseya* in the sense that they contain revealed truths. No less muddled is the clichè that the scriptures express the spiritual experiences of

their presumed authors. This last remark need some comments. An experience does not tell its own tale. It is interpreted, transformed into a thought, brought under a conceptual framework, to be put in words. Even poetic language does not express poetic emotions.[7]

"My thesis is: the words do not state, report, convey experiences. (The sentence, 'That bird is yellow', uttered by me does not state my perceptual experience, but the fact that.... Likewise, the sentence 'I am experiencing an oceanic feeling' states the fact that I am so experiencing, and not my experience. These facts are constituted by thoughts). Returning to the eminent texts of the *śruti*, I would like to say: those words qua words are *available* to the community, to members of the tradition (itself defined in terms of those words), in terms of which experiences of its members are being interpreted, talked about. The words are prior to experiences. They, as made available by the *śruti*, have *defined*, demarcated, constituted the horizon within which this tradition has been understanding itself. (The implication is that the same experiences would be made to tell a different story, in another tradition, whether a different set of words fulfill that foundation role).

"I have said that in my view the *śruti* texts were composed by human authors, but I have rejected the view that they *express* their experiences. The notion of 'intention' is more appropriate: didn't they seek to express their intended thoughts? Yes, but saying this is equivalent to saying that they express thoughts. The idea of intention, when rightly located, has a *self-effacing character*. It recedes to the background, and remains anonymous pushing the text and its possible interpretations to the front.

"The concept of *apauruseyatva*, then, is -- as I understand it -- the concept of the primacy and autonomy of the *eminent text* over the subjective intentions of the author. It is also the concept of the role the eminent texts such as the *śruti* play in delimiting the horizon within which our tradition has understood itself and within the tradition we have understood ourselves. The words of the *śruti*, available to us in their singular eminence, have been taken up by us, the inheritors of that tradition, to interpret our experiences, and thereby we have also interpreted for ourselves those words themselves. *The more we need to know the author to understand or interpret a text, the less fundamental it is. The less we need to know the author in order to understand or interpret a text, the more foundational it is.*"[8]

Professor Mohanty then explains the nature of tradition.

(7) "The tradition is not a set of beliefs or truths. You may deny that the *Ātman* is identical with *Brahman*, and yet [you] may be thinking within that tradition. It is rather that nexus of problems, concerns and concepts -- encapsulated in key words such as '*Karma*', '*Ātman*', '*moksa*' -- within which the thinking of a community moves. What I want to emphasize is that no statement, belief or thesis is so sacrosanct that it cannot be challenged. But the *concerns* and fundamental *concepts* shall continue to challenge us. *Śabda's* claim to be a *pramāna* may be weakened by my arguments (and limited only to moral rules), but it is restored to its foundational status of defining the parameters of the *central core* of Indian thinking.[9]

"Meanings of texts are correlates of acts of interpretation by interpreters. The idea of *the* meaning is misguided as it snaps the possibilities of new interpretations that lie ahead. Interpretation is a historical process by which the efficacy of an eminent text grows. The *śruti* texts are amenable to new interpretations, and our task is to interpret them from *our* place, in the light of our problems. One important consequence of the idea of *apauruseyatva* as I have construed it is that since the author's intention is irrelevant, (not merely because no one can claim to have entered into the author's mind, but for the deeper reason that the author himself is an interpreter of his own text), the text stands on its own, inviting us to interpret it, converse with it, and make it efficacious in shaping our thoughts."[10]

## Evaluation of Mohanty's Arguments

Regarding (1)--(3) Mohanty makes a fundamental distinction between understanding a sentence and knowing that the sentence is true. He points out that we understand the meaning of a false sentence, but we do not have a knowledge of hearing and understanding such a sentence.

The distinction between understanding the meaning of a sentence and knowing that it is true is very clear in the case of a sentence known to be false by the hearer. It is usual then to generalise from this case and to hold that this is a fundamental distinction in the case of all sentences. This position is analogous

to the argument from illusion in which from the obvious case of illusory perception being not about a real object, one argues that in all perceptions, veridical or illusory, one does not perceive a real object on the ground that illusory and veridical perceptions do not differ in kind as perceptual awareness. One is also reminded of Descartes' argument that it is not *prudent* to trust anything that has deceived us even once. Even if we grant, especially in the case of sentences known to be false by the hearer, that understanding the meaning of a sentence is different from knowing that it is true, it does not follow that in other cases the same holds true.

Mohanty argues that no sentences can give us knowledge of facts. Discussing the case of *laukika śabda* referring to perceptual objects, he says its knowledge-giving function is parasitical upon perception and inference. "In all such cases we are said to know only in as much as the possibility of perceptual confirmation or inferential backing is taken for granted." This is a very strange position. In no definition of knowledge is it stated that the *possibility* of perceptual confirmation, even though *taken for granted*, confers on one the right to be sure. Verifiability or the possibility of verification has been offered as a criterion of knowledge. As a matter of fact the speaker, if *āpta*, must be a person who has known the truth firsthand (*sakṣāt-kṛtadharmā*). But the hearer acquires knowledge second-hand, and there are cases where the hearer or the reader is not even in principle capable of confirming it by perception or inference. On Mohanty's theory, it is not possible for me to know the date of birth of myself or of anyone older than I, for the only possible source of such knowledge is written records like birth-certificates, horoscope, etc., or word of mouth.

Mohanty perhaps has those cases in mind where we have positive distrust of the speaker or, at least, those cases where we know what we hear is false. To be able to know that the sentence we hear is false, we have first to understand it. This understanding cannot involve belief or knowledge, for understanding the sentence is to realise that it is false. In such cases, the Navya-Nyāya philosophers point out that although we know the meaning of every word in the sentence, we cannot get a connected meaning, for our knowledge or belief that the sentence is false prevents us from getting the connected meaning. What we can do here is only to have a counterfactual assumption which is different from knowing the sentence-meaning as a connected objective situation. If we first believe that the person is reliable, we believe that the information conveyed in the sentence is

true; but if we find out later that the person is not an *āpta*, or that the sentence is false, we at once suspend belief, and again have a counterfactual assumption. This change from sentence-meaning to counterfactual assumption is not special here. Whenever our belief is realised as false, whether in perception or in inference, the belief is withdrawn and the content of belief is cancelled.

It will be unjustified, however, to generalise from such cases to all cases of sentence-meaning, for the cases in which we know that the sentence is false, either directly or by accumulating more evidence, are radically different from normal cases. It will not do to say in every case that understanding 'p' is different from believing or knowing that p. To do this would be analogous to generalising "the argument from illusion" to all veridical perceptions. Then whether sense-data are regarded as neutral entities or as a form of language, it becomes impossible to explain how in veridical perception we know objective situations or use the object-language correctly and without "any risk".

The point that I am trying to emphasise is that all the time all over the world people are knowing, believing, or hearing sentences uttered by other ordinary men, not merely the so-called *āptas*. It is natural, if not naturalistic, that one man should believe what he is told by other men.

This also explains the hearer's attitude on hearing a sentence *used* by a speaker. Usually the distinction between use and mention of sentences is explained in terms of the speaker's intention or attitude. What is important is to emphasise here what the hearer does when he hears a sentence as used. The hearer in such cases is hardly aware of the sentence as a linguistic entity but is directly aware of the reality which the sentence is about, just as by looking at an object we *see* it directly without being aware of the images through which we see. So also with the case of hearing a sentence used. The information conveyed tyrannizes the sentence. Here Wittgenstein's picture theory becomes useful. When we see a picture on a cinema or TV screen we at once take it to be the real thing. It is not a make believe supervening on the initial knowledge that it is a mere shadow; it is rather the other way around. It is our natural attitude to take what is presented as real in spite of our being deceived occasionally. Similarly, when we hear a sentence we at once believe it. It is not as if we first of all understand a sentence and then come to believe (or know) it on subsequent consideration.

There is more fundamental difficulty in Mohanty's theory. When a child learns its first language, it has to trust, as it naturally does, everybody teaching the language. Learning a language is not a matter of mere belief, not even a matter of firm belief; it is *knowing* what expressions in the language mean. On Mohanty's theory this would be impossible. Moreover, communication through language would be impossible. The speaker wanting to convey what he knows can succeed, on Mohanty's theory, in producing a firm belief, at best in the hearer. But this will defeat the very purpose of communication. *Taking for granted* that what one understands from a sentence spoken by *anybody can be* verified in perception or justified by inference is not to have a justified true belief or to know in any sense of the term. One person may take for granted that it will be falsified when the sentence heard is about an empirical subject matter. Taking for granted either way is equally possible and equally unjustified, except on the assumption that the speaker is trustworthy. But this assumption, again, will be unjustified in the majority of cases.

Regarding (4), in the case of supersensible realities like God or soul, Mohanty holds that *śabda* can generate belief "but not [a] claim to know unless and until some other *pramāna* is brought in support, either inferences or some mode of supersensible perception if permissible." Here Mohanty does not say that taking for granted what is said will be supported by inference or mystical intuition.

Regarding (5) Mohanty holds that *śabda* can be a source of knowledge, the only source of knowledge of moral rules, "of what one ought to do or not to do, of *vidhi* and *nisedha*." This knowledge-giving power of ought-sentences is totally independent of the speakers of these sentences or of the fact that competent authority has recommended them. One knows moral rules from the ought-sentences themselves. This theory of Mohanty requires elaboration of the fundamental distinction between ought-sentences and is-sentences in their knowledge-giving power. According to the Pūrva-mîmāmsā philosophy only ought-sentences in the Vedas are primarily meaningful, other sentences are only derivatively so (*arthavāda*).

Regarding (6)--(8) Mohanty explains the concept of *apauruseyatva* in a novel way. It does not mean the *śruti* texts were not composed at all by any author, human or divine. According to Mohanty "the *śruti* texts were composed by human authors" and express the intention of the authors. "The idea of intention, when rightly located, has a *self-effacing character*. It recedes to the background

and remains anonymous pushing the text and its possible interpretations to the front. The concept of *apauruseyatva*, then, is...the concept of the primacy and autonomy of the *eminent text* over the subjective intention of the author." Then he introduces the concept of interpretation. "*The more we need to know the author to understand or interpret a text, the less fundamental it is. The less we need to know the author in order to understand or interpret a text, the more fundamental it is.*" It is not clear if Mohanty would admit *any* sentence which can be understood without interpretation. For he also says: "Orthodoxy claims to have gotten hold of *the* meaning of the texts, whereas there is no such meaning. Meanings of texts are correlates of acts of interpretation by interpreters. The idea of *the* meaning is misguided as it snaps the possibilities of new interpretations that lie ahead." Mohanty is talking here only of eminent texts, yet he holds that *śabda* alone gives us knowledge of moral rules. It is not clear if we get our knowledge of moral rules from *eminent* texts. It is natural to suppose that we do. But now Mohanty says that these texts do not have any unique meaning but are open to interpretation. The main point of interpretation is the possibility of difference. Since interpretation is, in a sense, relative to the interpreters, *knowledge* of the moral rules too would be different for different interpreters in the same society, in the same tradition. This makes the knowledge of moral rules relative to individuals which is an undesirable consequence.

Thus the central concept of interpretation has to be examined very carefully. The term "interpretation" has been used in various senses. First, there is a narrower and a wider meaning. In the narrower sense, a hearer interprets what a speaker says only if the hearer cannot understand some of the words the speaker utters, because either the hearer does not hear properly or he does not know their literal meaning. So, for example, Michael Dummett can claim that "The essential point is that interpretation, in the strict sense, is of necessity an exceptional occurence. In the normal case the hearer simply understands, that is, knowing the language, he hears and thereby understands; given that he knows the language, there is nothing that his understanding the words consists in save his hearing them."[11]

If all the words, or most of them, are used in a way not known to the hearer, there will be no way of interpreting them (in this sense) except by cross-examining the speaker or observing his behaviour. "One old gentleman mystified his friends by saying that he 'must go and have his umbrella washed' until it was

discovered that he wanted his hair cut."[12] Although the person was suffering from aphasia, still it could be *discovered* (not interpreted), by repeatedly asking him further questions or by observing his behaviour, what he meant. In such cases, the speaker's intention is all that matters in understanding what he says. How one discovers the speaker's intention is another matter. Donald Davidson, for example, generalises from such cases to cover all *normal* use of language, which Dummett finds unjustified. Davidson's conception of language requires that the hearer interpret (in the wider sense of the term) in all cases what he hears. For Dummett, on the other hand, "...in the normal case, he [the speaker] takes for granted that his hearer speaks his language, just as a chess-player takes for granted that his opponent knows the moves of the pieces."[13] "Conventions, whether they be expressly taught or picked up piecemeal, are what constitute a social practice; to repudiate the role of convention is to deny that a language is in this sense a practice. In the exceptional cases -- those in which it is in place to speak of interpreting what someone says -- there are indeed no rules to follow."[14]

There is a fundamental difference between Mohanty's use of "interpretation" and Dummett's and even Davidson's. According to Davidson, it is the intention of the speaker which is the most important factor in understanding what he says, and "as long as the intention behind them remained constant it would make no difference what sounds were made."[15] This is why Davidson uses "interpretation" in the widest sense to divine the intention of the speaker in spite of the sounds he makes. But Mohanty uses "interpretation" not in the sense of Dummett or Davidson but almost in an opposite sense. To interpret a text, in Mohanty's sense, the intention of the speaker has to be ignored, and which when located properly "recedes to the background".

There is, however, a more fundamental sense of interpretation which may be identified with the wider sense. This is the sense which Derrida has given to it. According to him, linguistic signs are arbitrary; and they are essentially iterable. "It is some iterable aspect of the semantic item that carries the meaning."[16] "As a simplest and least problematic first place where interpretation could matter, correct interpretation could be taken to be a specification of what type a token is *really* a token of."[17] "The meaning of the sentence itself, in virtue of the iterability described above, is not tied to the particular personal intention which produced it."[18] Thus not merely linguistic signs but also thoughts, beliefs,

meanings, and for that matter, all significant items can be "otherwise understood". Derrida "agrees with Sellars that even experience itself is not given without mediation. Any awareness is mediated by language or language-like phenomena."[19] Contexts cannot help in determining the total meaning, for "contexts are not exhaustively specifiable without reference to intentions, beliefs, and so forth, which are themselves subject to interpretation."[20]

It is not clear if Mohanty would accept this extreme theory or whether he would admit sentences, meanings or knowledge, phenomena which are not open to interpretation. According to Derrida, awareness itself is not different from language and is therefore open to interpretation. "For Davidson, language and what language is about are inextricably bound. There is no 'presence' behind language, but rather what is behind language is inseparable from further language. Without the crutches of dualism, this is the view to which he and Derrida are forced."[21]

Mohanty is asserting that even the speaker or the author is not in a privileged position and has to interpret what he himself says or writes, which would seem to lead to this extreme theory of Derrida. But then the fundamental dualism between subject and object, the noetic and the noematic, has to be given up. So the distinction between understanding a sentence 'p' and knowing that p, which Mohanty makes, will no longer be fundamental. The point here is that not merely the author or the speaker has to interpret his own words, but he himself, at least his self-image, is a result of interpretation. The interpreter in so far as he is a conscious agent, is himself interpreted. "Since there is nothing to interpretation but interpretation into more essentially iterable and so unfixed language, that is, since the deferrals are to further deferrals, there are no anchors to fix interpretations even between languages or phases of the same language."[22] But, then, the question arises; how can there be any interpretation without an interpreter who stands behind every interpretation? This seems to be very near the Advaita Vedānta theory of the self which is not a substance but pure consciousness not belonging to anything else.

Here there is another point to be noted. "...[E]ven though language is inseparable from what it is about (that is, even though theory-content contrast cannot be made) the world is not just words. Language differs from what it is about and defers what it is about, but without the structure of two domains which both these terms ('deferral' and 'differing') presuppose."[23] But this is not intelligible at all. How can the world "differ" from language "without the

structure of two domains"? It is not like the absolute monism of *Śabda Brahman* school of Indian philosophy, but is very similar to Advaita Vedānta according to which the world, as also its difference from pure consciousness, is something essentially unintelligible.

There is, however, another fundamental point according to Derrida. All language is primarily written language; writing precedes speech; and all speech is really writing. This is to emphasize that "the separation of representing tokens from their conditions of production is essential to their being representing tokens at all. If they were essentially tied to their context, they would not be representations."[24]

According to the Indian tradition, however, it is the spoken word which is vital, a written word is a "dead word". That is why every *mantra*, whether Vedic or Tāntric, has to be uttered by the Ācārya or the Guru at the time of initiation. Words as spoken embody the power of consciousness of the speaker which is lost in writing. This is why in Indian philosophy generally the role of the speaker is fundamental; *śabda* has a mystical potency as an instrument of spiritual awakening, if it comes from a self-realised person.

Mohanty seems to have missed how the "eminent texts", the *śrutis*, have been used in the Indian tradition. In the Indian tradition the Vedas have been interpreted differently only because they are the only means of self-realisation, although "self-realisation" too has been interpreted differently in accordance with the different interpretations of the texts. Thus Pūrva-Mîmāmsā philosophers advise uttering of the mantras with utmost care, for there are no gods to be meant by the *mantras* which *are* themselves gods. The goal is attaining *svarga* (heaven) which again has been interpreted differently. Yet *the way* of attaining liberation is performing of rituals by uttering the appropriate *mantras*. Thus uttering the *mantras* is essential.

It is important to emphasise the *śruti* aspect of the Vedas. In the tradition of Advaita Vedānta, the *mahāvākyas have to be heard* from an *ācārya*, who has attained the highest realisation, who is a *jīvan-mukta*. The point made here is that exactly the same words or sentences spoken by different persons do not have the same effect on the hearers. Words coming from a realised soul have a potency to transform the personality of the hearer which is not present in the written words. As a matter of fact, Śamkara, in his commentary on *Brahma Sūtra* 1.3.28, says *śruti is pratyaksa* (direct experience), because it does not depend

on anything else for its *pramānya*; *smrti is anumāna*, because it depends on the *pramānya* of *śruti* (direct experience).

The entire problem of the authorship of the Vedas has arisen because they are believed to make or mar the whole life (cycle of lives) of individuals. The authenticity of the Vedas is intricately connected with authorship. Non-authorship is a solution, for this doctrine postulates the eternal truths of the Vedic injunctions. The *nāstika* schools like Jainism and Buddhism have their own *Books*, their own *mantras*, which they accept as *the way*. To ignore this aspect of the orientation -- Mohanty is not giving a new interpretation of the texts -- is a hazardous task to be undertaken with special care to guard against distortion. The fundamental difference in the nature of words makes Indian theories in general very different from the theories of hermeneuticists, structuralists and others according to whom every text spoken or written is a metaphor.

## NOTES

1. Cf. J.N. Mohanty, "A Critique of the Theory of Śabdapramāna and the Concept of Tradition", an unpublished manuscript presented at Oxford University in 1987, p. 1.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5. (Words or phrases in brackets signal editorial additions to or editorial modifications of this citation for the sake of clarity). -- FMK.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6. (Words in brackets signal editorial addition to this citation for the sake of clarity). -- FMK.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 12. (Phrase in brackets signals editorial addition to this citation for the sake of clarity). -- FMK.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-17.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

11. Michael Dummett, "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs: Some Comments on Davidson and Hacking" in *Truth and Interpretation*, ed. Ernest LePore, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 471.

12. R.S. Woodworth, *Psychology*, p. 260.

13. Dummett, *op. cit.*, p. 473.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 474.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Samuel C. Wheeler III, "Indeterminacy of French Interpretation: Derrida and Davidson" in *Truth and Interpretation, loc. cit.*, p. 481.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, p. 484.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 486.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 486.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 489.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 490.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 487.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 493.

# CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

**J.N. Mohanty**

What could be more gratifying for a philosopher than to be presented with a volume of essays devoted to his life's work, especially if these essays *critically* reflect upon his ideas? I am thankful to the contributors to this volume -- friends, colleagues and students -- for the honor they have done me by taking my thoughts seriously, and thereby occasioning their further development. These responses are preliminary steps in that direction.

Many of the essays are concerned with my attempts to understand, interpret and defend a version of transcendental philosophy. Their authors have raised some hard questions for me to answer or to take into account.

David Carr raises three problems for my assertions that transcendental subjectivity is *ontologically* prior to the empirical-causal order, that the life of consciousness is, *in itself*, not mundane but transcendental, and that the *concept* of transcendental subjectivity has superior explanatory power. Carr argues, in the first place, that *only if* the empirical-causal order is considered as a meaning-structure, this antecedent is not his but mine, then it must be traced back to its constitutive origin in the transcendental, as all meanings must be. But this conclusion follows only from a certain way of looking at the empirical-causal order, not otherwise. Second, my contention that it is the phenomenological reduction which shows consciousness to be, in itself, transcendental, begs the issues, for the reduction presupposes a prior decision not to consider consciousness as mundane. Third, surely the physicalist or the existentialist can have a place in their scheme for intentional meaning-bestowing acts. They can explain these latter *in their own terms*, if not, to be sure, in terms of transcendental constitution. But if that is the case, the claim I make to the effect that "transcendental subjectivity" has greater and more comprehensive explanatory power must be mistaken. The consequence seems to be that the universality-claim



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 269–288.

of the transcendental philosopher is as much based on his prior decision, as is the universality-claim of the physicalist.

Carr's first argument implies that the transcendental philosopher must show that the empirical-causal order is a meaning-structure. I believe this is what both Kant and Husserl show in their own different ways, and I need not here repeat their arguments. However, if such an argument is admitted as being reasonably plausible, it would seem one cannot stop there. One must be willing to admit that even transcendental structures -- including transcendental subjectivity itself -- are no less meaning-structures. I have, at various places, conceded that the talk of transcendentality itself is an interpretation taken over from the history of Western thought. In that case, the truly transcendental is that which is the source even of this interpretation, the source of all interpretations -- the historically developing life of the spirit (to use a Hegelian locution).

Carr's second argument rests upon the question: What could possibly motivate the transcendental reduction? If the reduction is to open up access to the transcendental domain, it has to be motivated from within the mundane order. This question has been discussed in the literature at length, and commentators such as Fink and Landgrebe have taken part in the discussion. There are three sorts of answers that are suggested. First, the reduction is totally unmotivated. In exercising the reduction, the philosopher is exercising her freedom not to participate in the beliefs of the natural standpoint. The second sort of answer is that the reduction is motivated by one of many possible mundane motives -- for example, the idea of philosophy as first science or the idea of providing foundation for all cognition, these ideas being available from the history of human thought. The third sort of response insists on a certain ambiguity in the entire situation. For example, in the natural attitude, the reduction appears completely unmotivated; in a philosophical attitude which seeks to understand the natural attitude, it finds sustenance in the historically available ideas of first science and foundational cognition, but its true sense emerges only at the end and not at the beginning. The charge of begging the issue has to be examined in the light of these three possibilities, but while doing so one needs also to bear in mind that the reduction is *not* a method to isolate a new domain of being -- Husserl's misleading locutions to that effect notwithstanding -- but to understand our experiencing-of-the-world in its inmost nature as meaning-bestowing and constitutive of the world.

At this point, Carr's third worry confronts us. Why should what the reduction lays bare be regarded as the *inmost* nature of our experience-of-the-world? At most, this is just another way of looking at things. How does one establish the superiority of this way of looking over the many others -- the physicalist, the psychologistic or the existential? The point I have sought to make, which Carr regards as unconvincing, is that the physicalist, e.g., has no plausible account of the meaning-bestowing function of intentionality, whereas the transcendental philosopher has an explanation of physics. Let me further elaborate this contention. The physicalist's explanation of intentionality would not only relegate the intentionality-phenomenon to a phenomenal status but would, in the long run, *refuse* to find a place for it in the scheme of things as envisioned in physicalism. She would refuse to do so not because she is hard-headed, and were she more liberal he could admit intentionality into her scheme, but because the scheme itself has no place for it. So her explanation of intentionality has to culminate in a rejection of the explicandum. Now consider the other possibility. The transcendental philosopher explains physics by assigning to it a phenomenal status (as did Kant) and/or giving an account of the interpretive acts that go into the constitution of logic, pure mathematics, measurement theory (something like Husserl's account of Galilean physics in the *Crisis*). She may have to go beyond this and have an account of what more, beyond physics, is involved in physicalism. But in no case need she reject them as simply false. She would have done so, if she had her own ontology, her own preferred picture of the world, e.g., a pan-psychism or an idealistic one. But since she abjures all ontologies as constituted theories, she need not have to say that physics or physicalism is simply false. This is what I meant when I said that the transcendental point of view has superior, more comprehensive, explanatory power.

Carr states the problem in a manner which makes it appear almost insoluble. "Perhaps, they [the physicalist and the existentialist] cannot *account* for these acts in transcendental-phenomenological terms; but then that is not their job. Science provides causal accounts and existentialism provides existential accounts. To ask them to provide transcendental accounts would be like asking phenomenology to give causal or existential accounts." He recognizes that I do not want this to be so. The impossibility of phenomenology giving a causal account or of physics giving a constitutive account is trivial. In comparing the two points of view, I was not asking who, of the two, can do *both* jobs, or who (of all possible points

of view) can take over the jobs of all the rest? I was asking who, of the two, can have an account of the possibility of the other's theory without simply rejecting it as false?

Margaret Chatterjee brings her inimitable grasp of the plurality of concrete life experiences to bear on my thoughts about a phenomenologically oriented transcendental philosophy. I will here single out two of her concerns: first, the marvelous way she shows that my distinction or, better said, separation between pre-reflective anonymity and reflective self-consciousness breaks down in the case of a whole range of bodily intentionality (whose noetic character and constitutive role I concede). In the second place, she wishes to preserve the plurality (of experience, of bodies, of life-worlds) in the face of the inevitable move of transcendental thinking towards higher and higher orders of generality.

My views about bodily subjectivity are basically in agreement with hers. I was saying, in the texts cited by her, that my awareness of my body is pre-reflective and non-positional. Reflective attention freezes it into an object. This part of the thesis remains unaffected by her evidence. What she succeeds in showing so well is that my bodily behavior -- still pre-reflectively and non-positionally given to me -- may be, in an important sense, reflective as in the fine examples she gives. These are examples of a sort of bodily behavior which is neither a pre-reflective intending of the world nor a reflective attending to itself. What is distinctive about these is not only that they are learned (as in the case of musical performance and religious rituals), but have incorporated into themselves a whole baggage of sedimented meanings. I agree with her and would regard my statement that "[b]odily behavior has no option of raising itself to the reflective level; it is condemned to pre-reflective intentionality" (cf. *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, p. 152) as misleading. I would rather say that much bodily intentionality incorporates meanings earlier instituted and, in that sense, presupposes prior reflective thought. But once such reflective thought is learned and appropriated by the body, the body's appropriate behavior can be unreflectively performed.

What I would like to know more is: how much plurality, how much "radical" difference is she willing to plead for? Bodies are individuated, no doubt, but human bodies -- not merely as objects, but as subjectively lived through -- exhibit a common structure, so much so that Dufrenne could speak of a bodily *apriori*. Body's noetic-constitutive role with regard to the perceptual world does exhibit

very general features: kinaesthesis, motility, capacity to touch and to be touched, self-referentiality, amongst others. I agree that there are different life-worlds, but how *radically* different can they be? What does "*radical* difference" mean? I would take two worlds (or two languages) to be radically different only if inhabitants, participants (or speakers) of one could not make sense of the other. Two such languages would be mutually untranslatable. What I have maintained is that this need not be the case. My scheme of overlapping noemata is meant to show what conditions must obtain in order for translation to go through.

With D.P. Chattopadhyaya (as with Joe Margolis), I share a common interest in the *possibility* of reconciling transcendental philosophy with relativism and historicism. After a long, perceptive analysis of the different strands of ideas, problems and motivations that have gone into the formation of my version of transcendental philosophy, Chattopadhyaya raises several difficulties with my position in section V of his paper. These difficulties have to do with the presumed context-insensitivity of transcendental subjectivity, viz., the role of life-worlds, the importance of the practical, the raw experiences and the constraints of the given noemata, the intolerance of transcendental philosophy for anything "awkward" or "cunning", the unexpected frustration on intentions ("frustrative imponderables"), the importance of will and value, and the impossibility of unifying all this diversity under one all-encompassing rubric gifted with a boundless power of internalizing all opposition and everything that is seemingly recalcitrant. Yet, curiously enough, it was precisely such considerations which led me to appreciate the strength of Husserlian transcendental philosophy. The best I can do, within the limits of this occasion, to respond to Chattopadhyaya's anxieties is to try to restate the nature of the version of transcendental philosophy I have been supporting.

First, *the* world is constituted on this version not out of Humean sensory impressions (contrary to Kant), but out of pre-given life-worlds. I have developed this theme elsewhere. Second, each life-world is characterized by all the features which Chattopadhyaya impresses upon us, and which I have recounted in the preceding paragraph. The task of a transcendental philosophy is to exhibit the constitution, not only of the scientific world as it results from theoretical and practical idealization, but also of life-worlds. The general principle of constitution analysis states that the constituted noematic sense is to provide the guiding clue for that analysis. The noematic sense of the perceived world presents no apodictic

truth, and perceptual intentions (expectations about the future course of experience) can at any time be frustrated. Furthermore, the world may turn out to be otherwise; my anticipation about the other person may end up in frustration; history may take a different course than predicted by the wise, and so on and so forth. There are two ways of accounting for these features. One generally explains these features by appealing to the way the world is. There is, however, no way of determining the way the world is save by appealing to the way our experience of the world is structured. The other is the path of transcendental phenomenology. The way the world is presumed to be is the noematic sense of our experience of the world. To claim then that the world, the life-world, is constituted does not entail that all the familiar contingencies of the world have to be eliminated. It only entails that the constituting intentionality (which is to be construed not as mere subjectivity, but as the concrete experiencing-of-the-world) is characterized by features which make possible a world with those contingencies to be presented to consciousness. What stands in the way of seeing the point of this claim is the reification of the world into a determinate thing (naturalistic prejudice) on the one hand and the emptying of consciousness of its intentionality, i.e., reducing it to the merely "mental" state of an individual person. What transcendental phenomenology regards as foundational is the concrete experiencing-of-the-world in all its modalities. Now I recall Landgrebe suggesting that calling it subjectivity is misleading. One may also call it the world; in fact, it is both in its historicity. It might appear from the way one, including myself, approaches this intentional life that one just "internalizes" whatever recalcitrant features show up in the world. But this is only seemingly so. As a matter of fact, those recalcitrant features are precisely features of the process of experiencing-of-the-world; ascribing them to the world is just objectifying them. As a consequence, we have a conception of foundational transcendental subjectivity that is not an ideal totality, but a temporal process in the course of which theories and their noematic correlates or worlds are constituted. (If the classical transcendental subjectivity is regarded, falsely and misleadingly, as *either* the god who imposes form on pregiven matter *or* the god who throws up the world from her own being, then the transcendental subjectivity I am vindicating would be akin to a Whiteheadian finite god, one of whose aspects is the temporally developing process of world. Charles Hartshorne has maintained that this Whiteheadian god is omniscient in the sense that she knows

all that is there to know and that she is the most perfect in the sense that she alone can exceed herself. If theological pictures cannot be dispensed with, this is more a useful picture than the classical god).

With these brief and certainly inadequate replies to Chattopadhyaya's searching queries, let me move on to my colleague Margolis. Margolis considers my "refutation" of relativism premature. This is not surprising to me, for he certainly is one of those who has most searchingly thought through the idea of relativism and has given perhaps the most elaborate and well-informed defense of a version of it. I should begin by assuring him that mine is not a refutation of relativism. A certain form of relativism cannot simply be "refuted" without begging the issue. What I have been trying to articulate is *a path* which would lead beyond relativism by "overcoming" it. As I have put it elsewhere, I lay out the conditions that must be satisfied if relativism is to be overcome. In other words, I have the guiding belief that a non-relativistic framework is possible which *tolerates* relativism. Margolis does recognize my distinction between "refuting" and "overcoming". I must confess that, in this brief response, it is not my purpose to examine Margolis' own version of relativism. What I shall do, as the occasion requires, is to respond to his critique of my strategy. As I understand it, the crucial argument turns around whether communication or understanding across "cultural worlds" is a regulative ideal or is constitutive. My contention is that the idea of *the* world works as a regulative ideal, and that with progress in communication and understanding, the many "worlds" overlap and progressively constitute a common world. Such an account appears to be transforming a regulative principle into a constitutive one. But this use of a regulative principle is illicit only if one, as does Kant, radically separates the regulative and the constitutive, and I do not intend to do so. Accepting the norm as a guiding principle is already tantamount to going beyond one's own world. But all this would not bother Margolis. He formulates relativism in terms of rejection of both bivalence and *tertium non datur*. I am not as yet quite clear if the consequence of rejecting bipolar truth values should be *called* relativism. I do recognize that a relativistic theory requires "intransparency of reality", "artifactual preformation of human cognition", "the historicist nature of human existence and thought" and "the culturally constructive nature of selves and persons". But I am not sanguine, however, that these latter points, severally or jointly, entail relativism. Yet to pursue this is to examine Margolis' version of

relativism, which I neither plan to do nor at the moment am capable of doing. As for myself, I do not want to concede all those very premises in an unqualified manner. Each of those decisive characterizations -- intransparency, preformation, historicity and contingently divergent cultural worlds -- need to be supplemented by their opposites in order to be adequate to human subjectivity. This is precisely what I have been trying to do in my work on transcendental philosophy. Margolis' characterization of my work, then, as construing phenomenology relativistically (as showing *how* to reconcile a relativistic phenomenology and a relativistic pragmatism) is only partly correct. The other part of that work consists in showing how a relativistic phenomenology requires and is compatible with a non-relativistic phenomenology.

In a deeply perceptive paper of my work on transcendental philosophy, William McKenna brings to light not only the dialectical strategy I employ (in fact, he made me aware that the strategy was dialectical in a certain sense), but eventually identifies a possible conflict between the two theses I accept: namely, the thesis of the identity of the empirical and the transcendental and the thesis that all constitution is constitution of sense. The identity of the empirical and the transcendental leads to the problem that I who am a concrete, situated, human being sets out, through reflection, to become something else which I really am. (This would show that I could not have remained satisfied with asserting a total difference between the person and the subject.) As McKenna clearly sees, mundaneity does not consist in world-relatedness, nor does transcendentality consist in worldlessness. A worldless transcendental consciousness could not constitute itself as mundane. It is only an intentional, world-constituting consciousness which, by constituting a world, also constitutes *itself* as an item in that world. The thesis of the identity of the empirical and the transcendental owes its significance to the fact that it corrects a traditional picture of two worlds which has a powerful grip on our minds.

The conflict that McKenna detects between this thesis and the thesis that all constitution is constitution of sense lies in my insistence that corporeality or bodily subjectivity cannot be reduced to reflective consciousness and yet it is a source of meaning and constitution. But this only suggests that even transcendental subjectivity contains within itself, as a stratum, corporeality and, but for it, it could not constitute a world of physical objects and other persons. To say that constitution is constitution of sense does not entail that the process of constitution

is that of an intellectual, disembodied consciousness; and saying that the world-constituting consciousness is characterized by corporeality is not to say that it is not transcendental.

David Smith has done excellent work on Husserl, on indexicals and on "awareness". Her he pursues his continuing concern with the idea of the ego. He asks the question, what kind of ontology of the 'I' is possible within a transcendental phenomenology. After a quite ingenious reading of *Ideas I*, conjoined with an interpretation of the concepts of "essence", "region", and "ontology" as found in the first section of *Ideas I*, Smith ascribes to Husserl a thesis very much like the dual-aspect theory of mind and body. According to this thesis, insofar as I am a conscious subject, I fall under the essence "consciousness", and insofar as I am human being, I fall under the essence "nature". Thus the pure "I" and the human "I" are token-identical but type distinct. (This agrees very well with the identity of empirical and transcendental experience). The ontology becomes more complicated with Husserl's distinction between the lived body and the physical body, between *Leib* and *Körper*, so that there are now two essences "Lived Body" and "Physical Body". The latter coming under the essence "Nature", the former under "pure Ego" and so under "consciousness". From here on Smith asks a question Husserl did not explicitly ask: Is the 'I' a substance or a process or both? If, as before, the 'I' may exemplify both categories, then Smith further wonders if the process 'I' is not a dependent part of a cosmic process (or, also -- and this he does not ask -- if the substratum 'I' is likewise a dependent part of a grand cosmic substance a la Spinoza?), which leads to a plausible and intelligible case for an Emersonian variety of monism of "The One". Needless to say, I am thrilled by this construction. Yet I am led to wonder at what point phenomenology has passed over into metaphysics with the last sort of questioning. Smith, of course, does not want to say that such is the case. His purpose, as I take it, is to outline a possible path to follow, and this he has done with perspicuity.

While Smith insists on the dual aspect theory of body and mind, and a ramified theory of body ("lived body" and "physical body"), Eliot Deutsch develops a concept of body which, while compatible with all this, follows a different terrain. As always, I never cease to learn from Deutsch and to marvel at the way he does concrete phenomenology. In between the two "lived body" (or "subject-body") and "thing body" (or "object-body"), Eliot Deutsch

introduces a third mediating term, the "appropriated body". If the lived body is the body as we experience the physical body from within, it is, according to Deutsch, a locus of dispositions to act in a certain way. But these dispositions, abilities and habits are laid down by what Deutsch calls the appropriated body. This latter notion of the body consists in the way I have made the physical conditions my own, the way I have integrated those conditions into my personal identity. If I understand him correctly, the primary sense of "body", when one speaks of "my body", is this appropriated body (which is an achievement concept) from which the two extremes, subject-body and object-body, are abstractions. This is an interesting contribution to the phenomenology of body. Recalling Margaret Chatterjee's examples (a musician's experience of her body as she plays the piano, a religious believer's when she performs rituals, or a dancer's experience of her body as she performs), I would think that these are cases of Deutsch's appropriated body. It appears, then, that the appropriated body is a cultural (in Margaret Chatterjee's words "reflective") extension of the lived body, and so is perfectly welcome into the way I have thought about the body.

Karl Schuhmann and Thomas Seebohm extend my work on some technical aspects of Husserlian phenomenology. The theme of indexicals and the theme of possible worlds are closely connected. Schuhmann takes up the former and Seebohm the latter. Besides presenting a history of Husserl's concern with indexicals (which only Schuhmann, with his incomparable knowledge of Husserl texts and a model clarity of thought, could do so effectively), Schuhmann, by implication, makes us understand better the philosophical motives underlying some well-known changes in Husserl's views. No commentator can help being happy when, unaware at the time of the textual surprises awaiting him, he finds later on that new textual evidences confirm his earlier hunch. Schuhmann's demonstration, therefore, that my criticism of Husserl also agreed with the way Husserl's own thinking on the indexicals developed, came as a pleasant surprise. But what about his very important philosophical notice: "this development tends most naturally towards a naive or, as I would prefer to put it, a realistic ontology, rather than towards a transcendental metaphysics in the sense the later Husserl tried to develop." Agreed that there are in Husserl's final versions two kinds of meanings, indexical meanings and objective meanings. And agreed that wherever there are indexical meanings there also will be objective ones if for no other reason, at least, because every use of "this" requires something to be affixed to it, as in "this tree" and the "tree" is an objective meaning. Is it the

case, then, that objective meanings, on their part, do not demand "a realization and concretization that would imply of necessity indexicality?" Furthermore, if they do so imply, and if indexicality is inseparable from the horizonal feature of intentionality, then some kind of transcendental philosophy is not to be ruled out. Those two large questions need, however, to be settled before deciding if indexicality implies realism or can lead us on the path of a transcendental phenomenology.

Schuhmann concludes by saying that even an unconditioned, context-free thought of possible worlds presupposes our rootedness in the actual world. The actual world, one may say, is the world to which we refer indexically, i.e., *this* world. (More generally, every world is actual to its inhabitants). Possibilities, therefore, have their genesis in the experience of the actual world to which we belong. This was in fact the point at issue between Hintikka and me. Seebohm takes that discussion foreward first by working out the process of modalization which gives rise to the modalities (see *Journal of the British Society of Phenomenology*, vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 235-51) and now by pointing out a built-in ambiguity in the conception of possible world as it is introduced in formal semantic systems. The world of the logician is different from both the real world and fictional worlds. A possible world is also not an ideal entity like mathematical entities. Moreover, Seebohm wants to distinguish the possible worlds of logic from the Leibnizian possible worlds as envisaged by God's mind. The former are abstractions, consisting of abstract individuals. God's possible worlds are not so. The worlds in the sense of logic cannot also be conceived as variations on the real world. Given this separation of logic from reality, one cannot but ask: how is it that the logical modalities apply to reality? Such a question, reminiscent of Kant's in the Transcendental Deduction of the categories, Seebohm suggests, needs to be solved phenomenologically by showing the genesis of the modal concepts in prepredicative experience, in other words, by taking up the problem of modalization. I am in perfect agreement with Seebohm's project, but would like to add, in all fairness to Hintikka, that he has lately come forward with changes in his theory of possible worlds which are geared to the task of making room for the phenomenological and genetic point of view. One of my problems in the original paper on this theme was the following point -- not all logically possible worlds are relevant for understanding the meaning of an expression. A Husserlian horizon analysis permits not all, but only the *motivated* possibilities.

Hintikka now recognizes that an unlimited possible worlds analysis of meanings is an illusion, and that we need, as he puts it, some "principle of production" lodged within the "home world". Into the details of this interesting development I need not enter for my present purposes.

While the contributions I have been discussing are concerned with my work over the last ten years or so, S.P. Banerjee goes back to an early paper "Modes of Givenness" (1958) which I still think important for me. After expounding with sympathy my theses in that paper, Banerjee questions, at the end, my attempt to separate subjectivity and personality. (The subject and the person are given, I there hold, in two different attitudes). Aren't the two always together, the person always a subject, a subject a person? A version of this separation is defended by Max Scheler in his *Ethics*, and Nicolai Hartmann takes him to task for overlooking that personality is not possible without subjectivity and vice versa. Another version of such a separation may be ascribed to the Advaita way of distinguishing the *sākṣīcaitanya* from the *jīva*. I did not intend to be understood in any of these ways. I had rather in mind the Kantian sort of pure ego as the universal subject of objectively valid cognition and as distinguished from the concrete person, the Heideggerean *Dasein*, as an affective, volitional, interested, concernful being in the world. The *Dasein* is not a pure ego; the pure ego is not a *Dasein*.

Frank M. Kirkland's essay makes in one stroke two major contributions. The first is to the history of "psychologism", and the other to the theme of relating Hegel and Husserl. I have a deep and abiding interest in both of them. It is usual to trace the idea of psychologism (as well as the term) to Erdmann in the 1870's. It is also recognized that Kant's epistemology, especially his thesis about the *apriori*, was given both a psychological and a logical interpretation. (There were not only psychological, but even physiological interpretations of the *apriori* such as those of Helmholz). By bringing in Fries, Kirkland has increased our understanding of psychologism, besides attempting a systematic definition of it (which by itself is an original contribution).

It is good and helpful to distinguish, as Kirkland does, between psychologism and empirical idealism. Frege's review of Husserl, not Husserl himself, mixes up the two, and ascribes both to Husserl. No less helpful is Kirkland's outline of Hegel's non-empirical idealism, his discussion of Hegel's distinction between *Vorstellung* and thought, and his argument that the structure of thought, which

makes nature intelligible, cannot itself be reduced to or located as an item of nature. It is this incoherence of naturalism which justifies Husserl's requirement that epistemology must begin by placing all naturalistic prejudices within brackets.

To Kirkland's illuminating comparison of Hegel, Husserl, and Frege, let me add the following remarks. Frege left act, *Vorstellung, Sinn,* and object isolated and distinct, and he did not find any way of relating them. In contrast, Hegel and Husserl explored ways of relating them and both held that objects are constituted by meanings. But the differences between Hegel and Husserl erupt at two places. Concepts or meanings in Hegel's philosophy are self-moving and self-developing structures. They are not in the *Science of Logic* correlates of any subjective acts of thinking. Hegel's idealism, therefore, is not only a non-empirical, but also in the strict sense a non-psychological idealism, i.e., objective idealism. Husserl's *Sinne* are correlates of acts. Husserl would reject empirical, psychological idealism, but he would not overcome the constitutive role of subjectivity. Differences between Hegel and Husserl also emerge with respect to the object. The object in Hegel's system is the *Begriff*; reality and concept coincide. The sensuous particular object of perception, for example, does not survive in the system. But in Husserl's philosophy, no kind of object -- the sensuous particular, the mathematical ideality, or any other -- is simply *aufgehoben*. As constituted, the sensuous particular object of perception still serves as the guiding clue (*Leitfaden*) for philosophy. Hence an ineliminable moment of realism persists within Husserl's idealism.

I must add that I have appropriated more of Hegel's insights in my *Transcendental Phenomenology: An Analytic Account* (1989). But the Hegel that I have found more helpful for my thinking is the Hegel of the Jena *Phenomenology*. What I have learned from him is that every form of consciousness is hermeneutic. It both interprets itself and its object. Philosophy cannot accept or reject a form of consciousness in part, in bits and pieces. It has to understand such a form as a whole and then get beyond it. Unlike Hegel, I have not been able to find one unique line of progression of such shapes, one unique line of the history of consciousness. Nor does the Hegelian notion of the *Aufhebung* of the lower in the higher appeal to me. As a consequence, I am left with a plurality of such forms of consciousness, but without any unique progression leading up to an Absolute Knowledge.

Let me briefly respond to the questions raised by Kirkland at the end of his essay. 1) As to the need for a phenomenological grounding of pure logic, Hegel's logic needs no grounding. It is the system of concepts which is self-supporting and self-moving. The Jena *Phenomenology* provides an introduction to it, but not a foundation. For Husserl, logic, or more specifically formal logic, presupposes, in the genetic order, prepredicative experience, which however is not the pre-logical and whose science Husserl calls "transcendental aesthetic". "Grounding", for Husserl, is justification, and the ultimate source of all justification is intuitive seeing. Formal logic as well as pure logic, both constituted by acts of thinking, is not all intuitively evident. They rest on unacknowledged idealizations as well as symbolizations. The task of transcendental logic is to lay bare the acts in which logical entities are constituted and to disclose the original source of evidentiary justification of the symbolic and the idealized thinking of logic. Hegelian logic is not formal logic. It is *the* philosophical system.

2) With regard to Kirkland's second question, I can only say here that meanings for Husserl confer determinacy on the indeterminate *hyle*. What Husserl lacks is Hegel's idea of determination *via* negation; he does not have the idea of the constitutive role of negation.

3) The actual is rational and the rational actual, so runs Hegel's famed statement in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of Right*. The "actual" here is not the given here and now. It is rather the fully developed reality. Hegel's actuality is closer to Aristotle's. The actual is Spirit as fully developed in the *Begriff*. Husserl's notion of the modalities is not teleological. The actual is constituted by possibilities. All actual experiencing (such as seeing) has a horizon of possibilities (of possible seeings). To grasp such possibilities is to grasp the *eidos* in an actual eidetic seeing. The ultimate source of constitution, for Husserl, is the living present in which all actualities and possibilities have their origin. Is it itself actual? I do not know the definitive answer.

Before turning to the two papers in this volume that focus on my work on Indian philosophy, let me express my gratitude to Jim Edie, Lester Embree, Ed Casey and Tom Rockmore for honoring me by contributing to the volume some of their ongoing work. With Edie's remarks on Derrida I fully concur. From Casey's essays on mind and memory I learned -- as I have profusely from his earlier works on imagination and remembering -- a great many things, but especially something I did not earlier notice so clearly: "More than just a mode

of minding, however, remembering is minding." Rockmore's paper on Jaspers on Schelling brings home the point how perspectival is the ascription of greatness to a philosopher. Embree makes an original contribution by extending his account of representational awareness to the historical sciences. To these colleagues, in the spirit of a "scientific co-worker", I can only say "Thank you."

Anindita Balslev and Sibajiban Bhattacharyya write on my understanding of Indian philosophy. Anindita Balslev shows remarkable grasp of the motives and tensions that determine my understanding of the concept of consciousness in Indian thought. She presses for giving a phenomenological-constitutive interpretation of the Advaita theory of *adhyāsa*. Since I contend that Indian theories of consciousness do not have a theory of *sense* (as distinguished from reference) and, hence, cannot have a theory of the constitution of sense (as a phenomenological constitution theory does), she responds by suggesting that the Advaita-Mîmāmsā theory of meaning as a universal does make room for a theory of sense and, hence, for some theory of constitution. Advaita Vedānta still needs an account of *how* intentionality appears within a non-intentional consciousness, in other words, an account of the constitution of intentionality itself. Within the framework of Husserlian thinking, act-intentionality is constituted in internal time-consciousness, and internal time-consciousness, in the long run, is constituted in the flowing "living present" (which, in the standard sense, is not intentional). This certainly is not the Advaita pure consciousness, although it (i.e., the living present) may be the "pure instant" of yoga and of Vijñānavāda Buddhism.

There are very few people around whose views on Indian philosophy I will be more attentive to than Sibajiban Bhattacharyya. When he takes my views about *śabdapramāna* seriously, that is pleasing indeed. But when he sets out to show that my thesis is just not tenable, there must be serious problems to reckon with. Let me therefore take up his arguments one by one.

First, denying that *śabda* is a *pramāna* is not denying that we do as a matter of fact know, as in so many familiar cases, on the basis of hearing a competent and reliable speaker. What is at issue is whether such knowledge is or is not reducible to some other varieties of cognitions. What I have done is defend a Vaiśesika-type *analysis* of the putative cognitions. I should, of course, believe what I am told by other men, but this belief amounts to knowledge (i.e., I have the right to be sure) only on the assumption that *were* I in the other's position

I would have known the same thing independently of depending upon someone's verbal communication. (Contrary to Sibajiban Bhattacharyya's claim, verification indeed is presented as a criterion of knowledge in the phenomenologist's theory that knowledge amounts to fulfillment of the intended meaning). How then do I know the date of my birth or the date of birth of anyone older than I? These cognitions, as well as a large body of historical cognitions of the past, need to be brought under a different type, *historical* knowledge or *aitihya*, which unfortunately most Indian philosophers reduce to either sabda or inference. I would love to argue for recognizing historical knowledge as a mode of knowledge *sui generis*.

Bhattacharyya's second argument is to render my point about understanding false sentences suspect by emphasizing the analogy of this point with the so-called argument from illusion. In order to bring home my intention in pressing the point about understanding false sentences, let me restate the many different but connected things I had in mind. For one thing, I wanted to ascertain if, according to the Indian theories, there is *śabdabodha* when the sentence I *understand* is either (a) false and known to be false or (b) false but believed to be true. Add to this the two other cases: (c) the sentence is true but wrongly taken to be false and (d) the sentence is true and taken to be true. Let me assume with the Indian theorist that the meaning of a word is the entity it designates, and the sentence designates a relational structure of connected word-meanings. Let us also assume, along with the Navya-Nyāya philosophers, following Bhattacharyya, that our belief (which need not be knowledge) that the sentence is false prevents us from getting the connected meaning. This takes care of (a) and (c). In case (a), the sentence being false, there *is* no connected meaning to apprehend; in case (c), the sentence being true, there is a connected meaning, but the *belief* that it is false prevents it from being apprehended. In case (d), there is a connected meaning and that connected meaning is also apprehended. The crucial case, therefore, is (b), where there is no connected meaning (the sentence being false), and yet *a* connected meaning is apprehended (since it is taken to be true). Prior to the correction of the belief that the sentence is true, which connected meaning is apprehended? It is here that the analogy with the argument from illusion enters. Taking the familiar example of the rope-snake illusion, which snake is being perceived where there is none? A real snake that is not here and now but elsewhere, or a false (*mithyā*) snake that is neither *sat* nor *asat*? Pressing the

analogy, one may ask: is it a connected meaning that is not designated by this (false) sentence but by some other (true) sentence, or is it a false (*mithyā*) connected meaning that is neither *sat* nor *asat*? *Anyathākhyāti* does not, in this case, seem plausible. The meaning of another sentence could not be apprehended when one takes a false sentence to be true. (The only likely case is when an indexical occurs as in "This is red." The same sentence-type uttered in another context would designate, if true, another meaning which may then be imported to this case when another token of the same type is false but taken to be true). A connected meaning that is neither *sat* nor *asat* would indeed be peculiar, for on the referential theory of meaning no expression can designate it. Bhattacharyya does not see this complexity. He sees only the following situation. First, we believe the sentence was false. We cancel that belief; the content of the belief is cancelled. But this account, despite its simplicity, does not meet the question: when I take a (really false) sentence to be true (mistakenly, of course), what is the content of my belief, what do I grasp, which connected meaning (for there is no such connected meaning, the sentence being false)? What happens when the belief is cancelled? Is the putative connected meaning dissolved into disconnected word-meanings? What I am arguing for is the following. There is a *content* of belief which is not the same as the object of belief, a meaning (*Sinn*) distinct from reference. The case of illusion (in perception) and of understanding false sentence brings out the need for the distinction, which is *not* to say that in veridical perception or in knowing a true sentence to be true we do *not* know the object. *Once the distinction is granted*, merely hearing an utterance by an utterer taken to be *āpta* is not as such *knowing*, it is *at most* claiming to know. It is necessary, therefore, for the Indian theorist who does not countenance such a Fregean distinction to contend -- as some do -- that *there is no śabdabodha* of a false sentence, but only a peculiar mental state.

The same is the case with a fifth case (e): when I hear, e.g., a sentence being uttered by an *āpta* (or by one believed to be *āpta*), but my *interest* is in ascertaining *what* he said (if I am a novice in Chinese, to ascertain its sense), or perhaps in translating his utterance to my home language. I am not interested in truth or falsity, but only in *sense*. I do not *yet* know anything except that "this sentence *means* this."

Consider the case of putative supersensible realities. If anyone is *āpta* about matters spiritual, Sri Ramakrishna is or was. I have heard that he said that the

goddess Kali spoke to him. I do not think this generates in me anything more than belief that the goddess Kali can speak, certainly not knowledge that she can speak. Or consider the Upanisads whose authors were, in the Hindu tradition, *āpta*. Understanding some of the statements in the Upanisads, statements that I understand, does not lead me to say that I *know*, e.g., that I am *Brahman*.

One of the difficulties Bhattacharyya finds in my view is that, if correct, when a child learns her first language, she trusts the teacher and simply *believes* what the teacher says. Yet it would be more plausible to say that she *knows* what the sentences mean. Of course, there is an important sense in which the child, in understanding what the elder says, knows what the elder *means*, and yet need not have any stronger cognitive claim than what belief implies. But this sense entails a distinction between sense and reference not available to the Indian theorist.

Why is it that, as Bhattacharyya points out, when I hear a sentence about a *sensible* reality uttered by a speaker taken to be *āpta*, I naturally take it to be true (as he says, the information tyrannizes over the sentence), but when I hear a sentence about a *supersensible* reality uttered by a speaker taken to be *āpta*, I am unlikely at once to take it to be true and that at most I may have a strong belief? The difference must lie in the nature of the thing the sentence is about. In the former case, verifiability by me is taken for granted; in the later case, it is not.

The purpose of communication is not to impart knowledge about what one knows, but to make the other *grasp* my *thought* and, through such grasping, to put him *on the road to knowing*. Are there then two layers in sentence-understanding? No. Sentence-understanding is grasping a thought; a knowing generated by hearing (under appropriate conditions) is a further achievement built upon this understanding. The two stages are distinguishable upon subsequent reflection.

Regarding the knowledge-giving power of ought-sentences, my view, as Bhattacharyya rightly sees, is akin to the Prabhākara view. But my construal of interpretive possibility entails the undesirable consequence that a tradition dependent upon the same texts would have to accommodate different interpretations, and so different moral rules, and so different *knowledge* of the rules. Such a consequence, I believe, cannot be set aside. The fact is that within the Hindu tradition, based upon the same body texts, very different conceptions of moral

life, including different conceptions of virtues and their ordering, have come to prevail. Compare Gandhi's interpretation of the Bhāgavadgītā with a conventional one. Does the Gītā justify fighting righteous battles and ensuing violence?

Now to come to the central conception of "interpretation". I shall not, in this response, distinguish my view about interpretation from those held by Dummett, Davidson and Derrida. (Certainly, I do not share their views. I have developed mine in greater detail in chapter 1 of *Transcendental Phenomenology: An Analytic Account*). Here I shall further clarify my views with reference to the points raised by Bhattacharyya. First, to interpret a text, on my view, is not to ignore the author's intention. What I mean by saying that the author's intention, when located properly, "recedes to the background" is that there is no independent way of ascertaining the author's intention save by interpreting the text. To say that the text means such and such *is to say* that the author means such and such, is to ascribe to the author an intention. So ascription of an intention to the author is not an additional result, but is, analytically, the same as assigning a meaning to the text. How could you divine the intention? Looking for the author's intention, then, is a vain project, just because the answer is trivially the same as the meaning you assign to the text. In the case of ordinary texts, I want to say the following. After taking into account all relevant objective considerations (word-meanings, rules of interpretation, and context), you may still be left with a gap which you fill in by choosing which of the many possibilities the author might have meant. You may look for her biographical details, letters, and other such evidence. But, in the case of the *śruti*, and this was precisely my point, no such *additional* evidence is forthcoming. Your text is all that is available; to assign to it a meaning is all that you can do. If you like, you can say "This is what the Vedic *rsis* wanted to mean," but that is identical with, and not even a distinguishable consequence of, "This is what the text means."

Second, I do not wish to give up the distinction between the noetic and the noematic. The noetic act is the meaning-giving, interpreting act; a higher-order act is involved in objectifying or thematising a lower-order act as I interpret the latter. The thought that the author himself is an interpreter of his own text I owe to Kant. This is clear from the changing self-understanding an author exhibits in the course of her life. The author may well give up her earlier self-understanding as premature, and replace it by a maturer one (compare Hegel's changing interpretation of his *Phenomenology* of 1807). There is a sense in which

my self-image is a result of interpretation, of the story I tell about myself, which is the result of how others interpret me and how I interpret their understanding of myself. This hierarchy of interpretations ends with what I would call the transcendental subject.

Finally, regarding the *mantras*, self-realization, and the hermeneutic method: if the *mantras* have to be chanted in order to awaken mystical potency, which is certainly how they were *used*, that fact does not rule out as irrelevant interpretation of the meanings of the texts. Otherwise why did a Sāyana or a Sri Aurobindo write a *bhāsya* on the Rg-Vedasamhitā? To be chanted for the purpose of spiritual awakening is one of the interpretations of those texts. Nothing that I say, the inexhaustible possibility of interpretation, rules out that interpretation of the texts. It is also true that every interpreter claims to be giving *the* meaning and rules out the others. And yet there are many interpretive traditions, to be sure, even with regard to the vedic literature. My second order theory wants to make room for them and for many more. If that is so, a hermeneutic theory, if that is what we shall call it, cannot distort the traditional. It will only open the tradition's self-understanding to new possibilities.

# SELF PRESENTATION

**Jitendra Nath Mohanty**

## I

I was born on 26 September 1928 in Cuttack, India. My father started as a lawyer and later became a judge in the State High Court in the same town. After graduating from the Ravenshaw Collegiate School, I studied for 2 years in the Ravenshaw College, both in Cuttack, but then moved to the Presidency College in Calcutta. It was at the Presidency College that I first studied philosophy, both Western and Indian. During my undergraduate years, which were also the years when the Indian freedom movement intensified just before the final independence of the country, two philosophical concerns were of paramount importance for me, viz., Gandhism vs. Marxism and Śamkara vs. Sri Aurobindo. The former intellectual polemic lead me to the question "Is non-violence an effective means of social change?"; the latter to the question "Are the world and finite individuals real or illusory from the metaphysical point of view?" Seeing Gandhi in Calcutta mediating between the Hindus and the Moslems and attending his prayer meetings were a profound experience. I received my B.A. in 1947 (the year India became independent and was divided) and went to the Graduate School of the University of Calcutta. Amongst the teachers who influenced me during those years were N.K. Brahman and Pt. Yogendra Nath Tarkavedantatirtha (who taught me, in exemplary manner, Śamakara's commentaries), R.V. Das (with whom I studied Kant's First *Critique* in conjunction with Vaihinger's commentary), and Kalidas Bhattacharyya[1] (who then and later taught us how to think for ourselves by engaging us in endless philosophical conversations). I received my M.A. in 1949, and in that year during a visit to Professor R.V. Das' house, I picked up from his library a copy of Boyce Gibson's English translation of Husserl's *Ideen I.* At that time I was reading Whitehead's *Process and Reality*, and it took me some time to change gears to read Husserl's *Ideas*. It did not all make great sense, but I was profoundly impressed by the very idea of a presuppositionless and



*F. M. Kirkland and D. P. Chattopadhyaya (eds.), Phenomenology – East and West,* 289–293.

descriptive philosophy. Günther Patzig was then visiting Calcutta as a UNESCO fellow, and I believe he suggested I read Nicolai Hartmann's *Ethics* for a better, initial understanding of the phenomenological method. Within a couple of years, I left the Law School and just a month before the final examinations I enrolled myself at the University of Göttingen.

At Göttingen, Nicolai Hartmann's passing away was a disappointment. I decided to do mathematics and listened to Siegel and Rellich (analysis), Lyra (Theory of Numbers) and Deuring (Algebra). At the Max Planck Institute, I continued to work in von Weizsäcker's seminars on philosophy of the mathematical sciences. In those seminars, I picked up the Copenhagen interpretation of Quantum mechanics and a sort of Kantian-Heideggerean understanding of science which von Weizsäcker was developing. But the most profound influence on my thinking was exercised by Josef König who came from Hamburg to replace Hartmann. He taught us how to make philosophical distinctions that cut across rival schools of philosophy, and initiated us into a kind of linguistic analysis that was not guided by, but contrary to, the great majority of linguistic philosophers' theoretical preconceptions. König himself sought to stay close to both Dilthey and Husserl, and helped me understand many of Husserl's central theses. Besides these two, Hermann Wein impressed upon me the Hartmannian thesis that realisms and idealisms of various sorts may yet contain a system-neutral theoretical content in common, and that we need to distinguish, within a philosopher's doctrines, what is historical (and system-bound) and what is ahistorical and so of permanent value. Eventually I completed a dissertation on Contemporary Platonisms with special reference to Hartmann and Whitehead[2] (with mathematics and Sanskrit as *Nebenfächer*), and returned to India.

## II

After a year's walking with Vinoba Bhave who was, as the spiritual heir to Gandhi, touring the country on foot to collect land for the land-less[3], I joined the Graduate School of the University of Calcutta and taught there (1955-62; 68-70) and at the Burdwan University (1962-68). These years I devoted to intensive study of Husserl, Kant and Indian logic (especially Navya-Nyāya). I also read Wittgenstein, Austin, Ryle, Quine and Strawson. It appeared to me that

phenomenology's chief concern should be with meanings, and that grounding a phenomenological philosophy, against the challenges of contemporary analytic thinking, should have to take the route of developing its theory of meaning[4] and its theory of consciousness as intentional.[5] In a theory of meaning, I felt that a phenomenological philosophy has to steer clear of the extremes of Platonism and anti-Platonisms of various sorts while at the same time making room for whatever needs to be salvaged from those theories. Furthermore, it seemed to me that a sound phenomenology must recognize *discontinuities* amongst phenomena of radically different kinds where such discontinuities show themselves, and must not seek to deny them in favor of a unified (i.e., metaphysical) account. This principle of discontinuity as well as the principle of complementarity, which states that phenomenological facts are capable of three complementary descriptions -- linguistic, ontological and subjective, have determined much of my subsequent thinking on these matters. My interest during these years, primarily the 60's, centered around questions such as the nature of *the given*, the relation between "meaning" and "truth", the role of "content" in knowledge, the problem of reference to a unique particular, sense-datum theories of perception, relation between formal logic and ontology, the distinction between theory and practice, and also the distinction between the subject and the person.[6] While working on these issues,, I was also under the guidance of the great Sanskrit scholar and logician Pt. Ananta Kumar Tarkatirtha studying Navya-Nyāya Logic, especially Gangeśas' *Tattwacintāmani* with the commentaries Māthuri, Jāgadishi, and Didhiti. These studies, requiring enormous effort, along with dialogue with my mentor over a period of 12 years, led me to see more clearly the deep structure of Indian logic, epistemology and metaphysics. These concerns, published in one monograph and several papers,[7] have lead, slowly over the years, to one large work on *Reason in Indian Thought* which has recently been published by Oxford University Press.

## III

It is only after emigration to the United States in 1970 that I found myself in the midst of a large and active group of able phenomenologists. In India I was quite alone in this regard. Here I found both phenomenologists and those analytic philosophers who were willing to respond to phenomenology to be of great

importance in the development of my thinking. But also there were Hegelians, Heideggereans, hermeneuticians and, lately, deconstructionists to talk to. The years at the New School were inspiring. Gurwitsch confirmed my understanding of Husserlian phenomenology. Hannah Arendt brought home to me the historicity of the fundamental concepts of Western thought. Hans Jonas impressed upon me the uniqueness of the organic and the biological as well as the deep and groundless problems of ethics that modern technology has brought upon us. Karl-Otto Apel led me to reflect upon critical theory and his own version of transcendental pragmatics. Kenley Dove and Albert Hofstadter led me to read Hegel more seriously than I had done before. Discussions with Føllesdal, Hintikka, Dummett, Dreyfus, and Searle led to various ways of looking at Husserl's relation to Frege and the relation of Husserlian noemata to possible world semantics. They also led me to various levels of understanding intentionality and to various questions about the relation between descriptive and hermeneutic phenomenology -- all of which imperceptibly over the years led me to the deep conviction that transcendental philosophy, in a revised and enriched phenomenological version, can appropriate into itself the points that its critics wish to make against it.[8] What it requires above all is an enriched notion of transcendental subjectivity, a sensitivity for historicism and relativism and an appropriate theory of meaning-constitution.

The problems that engage me now are: to reformulate the issues about relativism, psychologism, and formalism (in logic and mathematics); to formulate the relationship between transcendental logic (Kant, Husserl and Lask) and hermeneutic logic (Misch, Lipps and Lorenzen); and to bring to close a rather long and winding examination of the fundamentals of Indian thought. Concomitantly with this last task, a volume of English translation of source material in Indian philosophy is underway by me and Professor Matilal of Oxford. To have been able to bring into being (with the cooperation of Alexander Schimmelpeninck) and to edit (along with Karl Schuhmann) the journal *Husserl Studies* has been a source of joy.

It is often surprising for me how, in these more than three decades of concern with various powerful philosophical schools, Husserl fares so remarkably well. If one test of a great philosopher is that he lets us be free to pursue our own interests, Husserl surely satisfies that test. He taught us how to think with a sensitivity for phenomena and with a self-critical attitude. And by studying

Husserl closely, I never felt limited to a "School", but rather felt opened up to other possibilities, as long as these other possibilities were grounded in "experience". The "political" labels "Analytic philosophy" and "Continental philosophy" lost their grips on me, as did the "geographical" labels "Oriental" and "Western".

## NOTES

1. Cf. J.N. Mohanty and S.P. Banerjee (eds.), *Self, Knowledge, and Freedom: Essays for Kalidas Bhattacharya* (Calcutta: World Press, 1978).

2. J.N. Mohanty, *Nicolai Hartmann and A.N. Whitehead: Studies in Recent Platonism* (Calcutta: Progressive Publisher, 1957).

3. Vinoba Bhave, *Science and Self-Knowledge*, lectures collected and translated by J.N. Mohanty, (Banaras: Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh, 1958); J.N. Mohanty, "Vinoba's Gandhism", *The Gandhi-Marq* II, 1958, pp. 1-4; "The Mind behind Bhoodan", *The Aryan Path*, 1958, pp. 393-396; "Sarvodaya and Sri Aurobindo: A Rapproachement", *Gandhi-Marq*, III, 1959, pp. 1-9.

4. J.N. Mohanty, *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964, 1969, 1977).

5. J.N. Mohanty, *The Concept of Intentionality* (St. Louis: Warren Green, 1972).

6. J.N. Mohanty, *Phenomenology and Ontology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970).

7. J.N. Mohanty, *Gangeśa's Theory of Truth*, Santiniketan, 1966. Also "The Concept of Nature in Indian and Western Philosophy", *Journal of the Department of Humanities*, University of Burdwan, I, 1968, pp. 1-7; "Review of Matilal, The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, I, 1971, pp. 197-211; "Indian Philosophy", *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1974 edition, vol. 9, pp. 313-334; "Some Aspects of Indian Thinking on Being" in: M. Sprung (ed.), *The Question of Being*, Penn State University Press, 1978; "Consciousness and Knowledge in Indian Philosophy", *Philosophy East and West*, XXIX, 1979, pp. 3-10; "Understanding Some Ontological Differences in Indian Philosophy", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 8, 1980, pp. 205-217; "Indian Theories of Truth: Thoughts on Their Common Framework", *Philosophy East and West*, 30, 1980, pp. 439-51; "Subject and Person: Eastern and Western Modes of Thinking about Man", *International Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. XX, 1980, pp. 265-273; "Pramānya and Workability", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 12, 1984, pp. 329-338.

8. J.N. Mohanty, *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985).

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# INDEX

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